

Cake

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CAKES FEATURE

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CAKE PROJECTS**

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MAGAZINE

EXPERT ADVICE
FROM MICH TURNER

NOSTALGIC
Afternoon Tea

INTERVIEW
Queen of Wedding Cakes
Sylvia Weinstock



Owl Wedding Cake
Tutorial



"Vivanta" - Wedding
Cake Tutorial



Tuscan Illusion Cake
Tutorial

Cake
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North County Bakers Anonymous
incrEDIBLE art
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Wedding Edition



Welcome to the August issue of Cake Masters Magazine.

The Wedding edition
is one of my favourite
issues that we bring
together every year.
This one is filled with so
much beautiful wedding
inspiration, from Naked
Cakes to cakes with
multiple tiers, cakes
covered with flowers
and even special themed

cakes. I am really excited about our Dream Wedding
Locations feature, where ten cake artists have come
together to make cakes inspired by these amazing
settings. Each cake has been made with a place as the
theme and they are just stunning!

The highlight of this issue is our interview with a
cake hero of mine - Sylvia Weinstock. She needs no
introduction, but I will give you one anyway: with over
35 years of experience making cakes for the likes of
Oprah, Robert de Niro, Jennifer Lopez, the Kennedys and
the Clintons, I am totally honoured to have Sylvia in our
magazine this month. She is a force to be reckoned with,
and someone with incredible sass and drive for her love
of creating beautiful wedding cakes. The one thing that
totally floored me was the discovery that she only uses
Italian meringue buttercream to cover her cakes - NO
FONDANT! Hers is a truly amazing story, so I hope you
enjoy reading it.

With so much in this issue, we have a lot to share with
you. We have some interestingly refreshing takes on
Wedding Toppers for you to be inspired by. We have a
masterclass in Naked Cakes from Miss Ingredient, who
specialises in beautiful wedding cakes. Also in this issue
is a detailed account of how to create fabulously tall
wedding cakes. Covering all the DOs and DON'Ts, it will
ensure you get it right when assembling towering cakes.
For this feature, we asked the boys from Sugar Sugar
Cake Studio to give us their top tips and tricks and they
share some fantastic insight!

We have four wedding cake tutorials for you to try, from
the classic and stylish to a novelty Owl Wedding Cake.
My favourite tutorial this month is the Tuscan Illusion
Cake by Nasa Mala Zavrzlama. It's very detailed and easy
to follow - you must give it a go!

As always, check our our Elevenses section for
competitions, reviews and tips and, this month, expert
advice from Mich Turner MBE. Mich answers questions
with advice for beginner wedding cakers, through to
dealing with bridezillas!

I hope you enjoy this issue, remember to share your
creations with us on Facebook!

Enjoy the issue!

Rosie

Editor

editor@cakemasters.co.uk

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Nominate Now!
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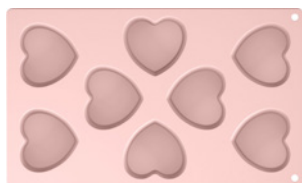


Tuscan Illusion Cake Tutorial by Nasa Mala Zavrzlama

30



Baking Wish List



Katie Alice Pink Heart Shaped
Silicone Muffin Moulds
Creative-tops.com
£9.99



LOVE Patchwork Cutters
Patchworkcutters.co.uk
£6.50



Bride & Groom Moulds
Cupcake Set
Karendaviescakes.co.uk
£14.50



Portmeirion® Botanic Blue Set
of Six Pastry Forks
Ecookshop.co.uk
£12.95



Wedding Cakes Silicone Mould
Fpcsugarcraft.co.uk
£11



Bride and Groom Wedding
Cupcake Kit
Notonthehighstreet.com
£11



Rainbow Dust Pink Hearts
Edible Confetti Sprinkles
Cake-stuff.com
£3.65



PME Supatube Writing
Nozzle Tip 0
Windsorcakecraft.co.uk
£2.46



Wooden Cake Sign
Tch.net
£12



Wilton Garden Gazebo Wire
Separator
Design-a-cake.co.uk
£17.49



Ivory Satin Ice
Satinice.com
Available in all good cake
decorating shops



Personalised "Mr & Mrs"
Wedding Cake Topper by
Sophia Victoria Joy
Notonthehighstreet.com
£23

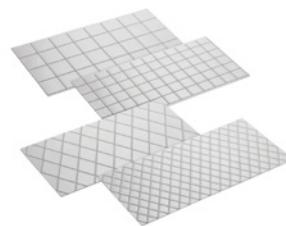
Baking Wish List



Fuchsia Pink Ready to Roll
Fondant Icing
Renshawbaking.com
£1.79



Wedding Posy Cookie Cutter
Lindyscakes.co.uk
£8.35



Cake Boss Four Piece
Fondant Imprint
Debenhams.com
£7



Love Birds Cake Side Stencil by
Designer Stencils
Thecakedecoratingcompany.co.uk
£14.99



Eternity Cake Lace Mat
Thecakedecoratingcompany.co.uk
£29.99



Innovative Sugarworks
Turntable Expander
Thecakedecoratingcompany.co.uk
£40



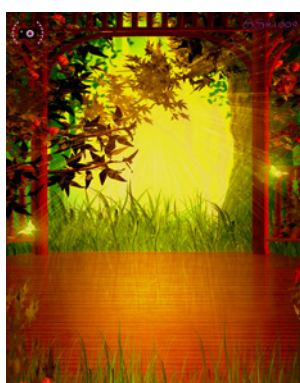
Symphony Mold
Marvelousmolds.com
\$28



Round Ivory Mirrored Cake
Stand
MelodyMaison.co.uk
£16.95



PME Heart Shaped Plunger
Cutters, Set of Three
Sugarshack.co.uk
£9.49



Sugar Scene #1009
Theribbonshack.ie
€30



Hobbycraft Sugar Peony
Head Pink
Hobbycraft.co.uk
£6



Rainbow Dust Light Gold
Metallic Food Paint
Design-a-cake.co.uk
£3.99

INTERVIEW

Sylvia Weinstock

Sylvia Weinstock Cakes

With 35 years of experience making cakes for the likes of Oprah, Robert de Niro, Jennifer Lopez, the Kennedys and the Clintons, to name but a few, Cake Masters Magazine is thrilled to interview the revered cake artist, Sylvia Weinstock. Her focus on creating delicious works of art with only the finest ingredients, her buttercream cakes and trademark sugar flowers, have earned Sylvia the given title of “Queen of Cakes”. As a pioneer of the industry and an inspiration to so many, Sylvia started her cake-career at the age of 50, is a breast cancer survivor of 35 years and is still enjoying her work at the age of 85. We are honoured to interview her about her cake journey, the amazing work she has done and her plans for the future.

Photo credit: Carol Chan



When did you start making cakes?

Well, I started making desserts in 1975. I would go on weekend skiing trips at Hunter Mountain with my husband, Ben, and three daughters; they would ski and I would bake. I was introduced to the retired pastry chef, George Keller, who took me on as an apprentice. But it was the 1980s when I really started what I'm doing now.

In the early days, you either had a beautiful cake that was dry and inedible, because it took so long to do the decorations and finish up, or you had a delicious cake with very few decorations. Sometimes, they just sprinkled something on it or they used fresh flowers, which of course, we don't do. I learned to make the flowers on a delicious cake by making the flowers in advance and keeping them in bins that are clean and dry. This allowed me to make a cake within several hours.

Tell us about your first official order

My first official order was for a young woman who was a friend of one of my daughters. She was getting married so I made a little cake for her. She worked in a café and thought the cake was so pretty that she put it in the window. As luck would have it, a young chef who worked for a big name caterer passed by, saw it, went in, enquired, and got in touch with me. The chef ordered a cake for that caterer, who was an Upper East Side gentleman that catered to the ladies at lunch. There were twelve very, very well known ladies that came to lunch in his establishment and he served my cake, which the women thought was great. They had never seen a cake filled with flowers that was so pretty!

One of the ladies ordered another cake to go to the Carlyle hotel here in New York. The banquet manager saw it, and that was really the beginning. Of course everyone is highly competitive, so as soon as one person heard about it, the Pierre hotel called me, the Plaza hotel called, and before you knew it, I was off and running a business. The story is basically that you can have all the best skills and use the best ingredients, but it comes down to timing, location, and luck.

Where did you learn to make flowers?

I initially made flowers out of icing, but they didn't last and they started to go rancid, so I had to find another material, like dough. I really wanted to go into business; this was not a hobby for me, so I had to figure out how to make flowers that you could stockpile. I used to be a kindergarten teacher and I'd worked with putty and such, so it was easy for me to translate this into a sugar. Once I understood the chemistry of what made this sugar soft to work with, hard when it dried, and impervious to time, it was just a matter of playing with things to make it work.

I learned on my own; I'd get a real flower and study it. I think the first one I ever did was a

rose. I took it apart, petal by petal. I lined up the petals and tried to duplicate them and put them together again as a real rose looks. Being a crafty person, I could knit, sew and crochet, so all of these skills came into play. Never the less, it needs air conditioning. Even to this day, if it's too moist, the flowers will melt because the core of them is sugar.

Do you make your own gumpaste?

Yes, I make my own and we call it sugar dough. I hate the word gum, and I don't like the name paste. We call it sugar dough because we're working with dough and sugar.

If you hadn't become a cake maker, what do you think you would have done instead?

I probably would've ended up as a psychologist. I already have a degree in educational psychology. When I meet my clients, I'm always interested in who they are, how they met, what they do for a living. Sometimes we kick around ideas about life

in general, and even on rare occasions, I give advice.

Did you ever think that your business would grow into something as big as it is now?

No! I think you have to take it a bit at a time and keep your head and nose to the ground and focus on what you have. I think if you really are involved, completely immersed in your business, you sleep with a pencil and paper next to your bed. People say passion; I don't like to use the word passion, as I say that belongs in the bedroom! It's about being immersed and completely involved in your business.

Remember, it isn't just me. It's a team that helps me. I may be the leader of the team, but you cannot grow at this rate and do it all on your own, you need help. In the beginning, the best help I had was encouragement from my husband who has retired from the law.



Photo credit: Sylvia Weinstock Cakes

He felt that if this gave me great satisfaction, this is something I should continue to do. As we achieved our success, we were in the right place, in New York City, at the right time, with the right product because we were the new kids on the block.

Tell us about your team

My team is about 17 people and the first person that came to work for me was a young woman from the Caribbean, Vilna, who has been with me for 31 years. She is the head of the flower division and we have seven or eight ladies that make the flowers under Vilna's direction. I've had a succession of people over the years and had one woman who made sugar flowers but really loved baking, so we took her out of flowers and taught her to bake our cakes. We also have artists that graduated with degrees from art school and do sculpting. I may have the original idea of what I want and I'll do a sketch of it, and they will then complete it. These artists now can do figurines, portraits, modelling and will follow through on the final look of a cake.

We have Colin at the office who answers the phones, takes important information, and does the billing etc. He's the first voice when you call and it's very welcoming. He's charming and that's very important in any business.

Then I have Emily who's been with me about 15 years, who also came out of art school. She helps direct the artists and with the design sketching. We do some watercolours for our brides so they can have a better idea of what they're getting.

There's also Nanci. She's a fantastic woman and we became very good friends after meeting through a client. Through the years, I said to her, 'You know, I can't handle all of this. I don't have the expertise and I don't have the knowledge' and asked her to help me. We started a relationship and she is my go to person for advice, hand holding, PR, and my licensing partner.

How do you feel when people say that you are the Queen of Cakes?

First of all, I feel rather humble about it. Second of all, I think my team has earned that title, not just me. We have a Queen of England, but the country runs because there are so many people there helping it. I'm very humbled by it. I feel that we've worked so hard for it that it's fair to be recognised in our field as professional.

In three words, how would you describe your cake style?

I would say delicious, beautiful and memorable.

What do you feel is your most recognised cake?

I think the floral cakes are something that we excel at, so I would say that. Though I rather hope I haven't pigeon holed myself. We've also incorporated hand painting and things that are personal to the bride and groom. We did a wedding cake for a gay couple and



Photo credit: John Labbe





they had little pug dogs. My artist did them. They're absolutely adorable. It's not just floral; we've expanded, so it is trying to interpret someone's thoughts and someone's dreams into the materials that we work with.

Tell us about your most challenging cake, and what was challenging about it?

There are so many, but I will tell you this. We just did a series of 65 mini cakes for a Washington D.C. party, and Sandi Hoffman was the party coordinator on this one. She and a young man called Myron Wolman had some ideas about these mini cakes each person would receive. They were all personalised mementos of the man whose birthday it was. Being from the building business, we did a tractor and a cell phone. His family used to be in the necktie business so neckties were there too as well as crossword puzzles. It took about two weeks to do the artwork and I would call it a killer because miniature cakes are very time intensive.

Do you feel that it's important for a cake to be as delicious as it is good looking?

I'll give you an example. Did you ever buy a big beautiful peach and look forward to savouring it, but when you bite into it, it turns out to be like a potato? I mean, you throw it away as it's not memorable.

I believe the combination of taste and look is what makes people remember it. Customers will come back and say, "Ten years ago you did my wedding cake and I will never forget how beautiful it was. It was outstanding. It's the only thing I remember from the wedding." I get a lot of wonderful feedback, and as a matter of fact, a woman came to me with a tired bouquet of sugar flowers that had been on her wedding cake. She asked if I could somehow reuse them on her daughter's upcoming wedding, so I did.

Can you talk to us about how styles or trends have come and gone, or are popular now?

One thing that's very popular that I don't agree with is the use of fondant. We only use Italian meringue buttercream. I think buttercream is food and we are, in our own way, creating food. Pretty is one thing, but delicious and food is another, and we only use the best ingredients. I find that people are not doing that. Nowadays, in terms of the look and design, a lot of things are pre-moulded and stamped out. For me, it's a matter of the integrity of the product; it's a matter of the artistic side and not compromising on it. We will do a cake that is hand painted on buttercream. It goes in and out of the refrigerator to chill up as the buttercream softens, because you can't paint on it if it's too soft. It takes a long time to do that and you have to have an artist who's skilled.

Italian meringue buttercream is scrumptious, it melts in your mouth, and it is so smooth. With fondant, people peel it right off. Also the filling inside cakes can't be a chocolate mousse or cream with fresh fruit, because that would have to be refrigerated and fondant can't be refrigerated. The quality of what you're eating is completely different.

Photo credit: John Labbe



How do you deal with buttercream covered cakes in hot weather?

One of the first questions we ask is if there is air conditioning? When we ship, we double box and we use special ice packs to keep it cold.

Do you deliver your cakes?

We contract out for deliveries. At one time, we did it ourselves, but Manhattan has very few parking spaces and it's very difficult. It's much easier for us to find a good courier who's careful and who's been trained to deliver our cakes.

Is travelling with buttercream cakes difficult, especially when you have to take them on the planes?

No, but it's emotional. We pray a lot. The cakes go into cargo. They're in the belly of the plane where it's 40 degrees. They usually have our insulated ice packs and we've sent a cake to South Africa from New York without a problem. We've gone to a number of countries in the world. Our only issue, of course, is customs.

When people come to you with their orders, do you help them with their design, or do you find that most brides are very specific in what they want?

Firstly, I tell them that I don't copy anybody else's work. I really feel that people come to me because they know we're creative. Suggestions, or the idea of what brides want, gives me a jumping spot; I can take those ideas and interpretations and refine them so they fit into something we see as well and 110% of brides are happy. They like the idea that we want to be specifically creative for them, because everybody wants to feel unique.

A lot of cake decorators feel very aggrieved when ideas and designs are copied.

How do you feel about people copying your designs?

I'm saddened by the fact that they can't be original and they have to copy, but at the same time, I'm aware that there are imitations of almost everything. Chanel, Dior, Louis Vuitton, even Picasso. There is no way that you're able to copyright art. The only thing that you can feel is sorrow that they can't originate something on their own.

Inspiration is all around you. You go to a museum, you look at a building, you look at fabric, and you look at somebody who combines jewellery with fabric and a look. I mean, to get inspiration, just open your eyes, it's out there. It's up to you to take that and internalise it. I think it's important to be open to working with other people. Designers, textile artists, floral designers, you can work with them as a team. Never be a diva, and never be arrogant.

Your own wedding to Ben was very short and sweet, you toasted a glass of wine and had some honey cake. If you could have a dream wedding cake, what would it be like?

Today? Well, I'm very partial to lemon, so I



Photo credit: John Labbe

would probably make myself a yellow butter cake with lemon and fresh raspberries. I think roses are something very beautiful. I'm tired of orchids, but I've always like roses. I've been to England many times and your roses are spectacular. I don't think people realise that you've got the weather, and it's wet so they grow beautifully. I've never seen roses as large as the ones you have in the UK. The other flowers I like are lily of the valley and freesia. Freesia, to me, smells like Earl Grey tea. So, I would have roses and maybe freesia, and the classic lily of the valley.

Do you feel you will retire any time soon?

Would I retire? I don't know what I would retire to. I know what I'm doing now, and where I'm coming from. I wouldn't know what to do next in retirement, so that's a fear. I wake up every day with a purpose, and the purpose is this business, so retire is a frightening word for me at the moment.

What would you say has been your ultimate highlight in your business career to date?

I think licensing. Sylvia Weinstock Licensing was created in 2013. We're trying very hard to share what we do, the Sylvia Weinstock Cakes tradition of art and excellence, with other people in other parts of the world. We already have a license partner in the Middle East, and hopefully soon in the Far East. Here in the states, we started a marriage in a sense with a hotel chain and who knows!

How did you decide on Kuwait?

The country chose us. A young woman who's from Kuwait, who had the skills, who had studied flower making, who understood fine quality, who is a Lebanese/Kuwaiti, but also has lived in London and in Paris, wanted to do this, and came to us.

You sound like such a busy lady. What do you do to achieve a work/life balance? How do you relax?

Let's see. I listen to beautiful classical music. I love Bach, Mozart and Beethoven. I read. I read political books, mysteries and I love a great spy story. I have a drink at the end of the day with my husband. It's always vodka. Everybody knows that. That's the way to unwind; it's the end of the day.

I'm also a grandmother. I have six wonderful grandchildren, three granddaughters and three grandsons, ages 21-26. I have three married daughters and I have relationships with everybody. When writing emails to them, I've given myself the title "GM", for short!

**For more information, visit:
www.sylviaweinstock.com
[@SylviaWeinstock](https://www.instagram.com/SylviaWeinstock)**

Photo credit: John Labbe



Photographs and Memories

As seen on
TLC's *Four Weddings!*
Sugar Sugar Cake Studio
featured
Icing Image's Products
throughout
this amazing cake!

Photo: Tracy Kreck
Photographic Passion

"We use Icing Images Brand Icing Sheets and we love them! We tried ALL the icing sheets on the market and the ones from Icing Images are above and beyond the best. They are the highest quality. The images that are printed on them look fantastic and they are EASY to peel off of the plastic backing when it's time to decorate a cake."

Ted Scutti
President and Sugar Artist
Sugar Sugar Cake Studio



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Ted Scutti and Adam Starkey
Sugar Sugar Cake Studio

Cake

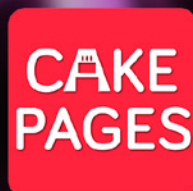
MASTERS

MAGAZINE

AWARDS 2015

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Cake
INTERNATIONAL



CELEBRATING AND AWARDING TALENT IN
SUGARCRAFT AND CAKE DECORATING

SATURDAY 7TH NOVEMBER 2015
BIRMINGHAM NEC

WWW.CAKEMASTERSAWARDS.COM

OUT & ABOUT

This feature tells you about our travels out and about, events around the world and upcoming events!

This month we have...

... discovered Periscope

Periscope is an app that lets you broadcast video to the world. Your followers are notified when you go live and they can join, comment and send you hearts in real time. We think it is perfect for cake decorators all over the world to share tips, find out about cake-y events and get to know the cake community. Our editor, Rosie, is excited to let you see through her eyes and will be broadcasting about:

- Magazine previews
- Cake trends
- Collaborations
- Cake spotlights
- Cake artist highlights
- Opinions and views on cake news
- Cake shows
- Cake Masters Magazine Awards

There are many other fabulous cake artists on Periscope sharing their knowledge, showing how to make certain creations, or carrying out daily cakey tasks! Cake decorating can be a lonely job sometimes, but periscope allows you to peer into the world of many others... just like that!

Follow @cakemasters to be notified when Rosie is live on Periscope and get involved!



... seen some fabulous work at the North Florida Cake Show and Competition

The inaugural show for the North Florida Cake Show and Competition had the theme: Fashionista - Couture Fashion. Contestants had to choose couture dresses and design a three-tier or higher cake made of Styrofoam. There was also a Shoe and Purse and Wedding Cake category. With over 40 cakes on display in the competition and 13 vendors on hand, it was a great show.

On the Saturday, several live events were held. The Taste of the South themed cupcake tasting competition included three categories: Dessert, Juice and Drink, and Savoury. The entries featured over thirty flavours such as "Chicken and Waffle", "Sweet Tea", "Bourbon Chocolate Pecan Pie" and "Peach Cobbler". There was also a Florida vs Georgia Mystery Box Challenge, made up of two teams of three decorators. In front of a live audience, they had to decorate a three-tier cake with the items provided in the Mystery Box. Florida won!

On Sunday, the main event was the Battle of the Instructors. Marilyn Bawol of Unique Cakes, Timbo Sullivan of Cakes by Timbo, and Jockan Jordan of Dat Cake Place each had a model to transform into edible creations live on stage, then walk down the pink runway. The winner was Marilyn Bawol.

A Baker's Paradise will be hosting the show in 2016, the North Florida Cake Show and Competition in October 2016 and the first Caribbean Cake Show and Competition in July 2016, held on the beautiful island of St. Thomas, USVI.



Image Credit: Sharon Spradley

... been planning the Cake Masters Magazine Awards 2015

Back for 2015, the Cake Masters Magazine Awards is the only major awards recognising the best talent in the world of cake decorating and sugarcraft. With fourteen categories, the awards will celebrate everything from specific decorating techniques to Best Learning Experience and Best Product. We are also excited to have a new Sugar Flower Award. The awards website is now live and we need you to share with us who you think deserves these coveted industry awards. To find out more about the categories, the sponsors and to make your nominations, head to www.cakemastersawards.com.

After the success of the first reception for the Cake Masters Magazine Awards held last year, we have got an even bigger and better evening planned for this year. With a reception, three course meal, the awards presentation and a live band to finish the evening in full swing, it is an event in the cake calendar not to be missed. The event will be held at the Birmingham NEC, in association with Cake International. Tickets will be released soon, so sign up to our Early Bird List on the website now to make sure you're not disappointed. Don't forget to save the date: 7th November 2015!



We are looking forward to...

... Afternoon Tea Week

The 2015 edition of Afternoon Tea Week will be the biggest yet, with a roster of exclusive events planned for a nationwide celebration of our favourite teatime tradition. A packed schedule includes themed menus, talks, tastings and celebrity hosted teas as well as exclusive offers in hotels, restaurants and tearooms across the country. We're particularly looking forward to the Literary Afternoon Tea with Rosie Millard at the Conrad London St James, as well as trying Paul A Young's specially curated artisan chocolate collection!

Afternoon Tea Week will be held 10th-16th August with exclusive events and discounts up and down the country. For more information, head to www.afternoonteatweek.co.uk.



... The Americas Cake & Sugarcraft Fair hosted by Satin Ice

We will be jetting off to Orlando, Florida for this exciting new show in September and we hope to see you there. The international trade show is open to the public and is expected to attract more than 150 vendors and 30,000 attendees, plus with headliners like Buddy Valastro, Ron Ben-Israel, Mich Turner and Chef Roland Mesnier, it's going to be big! With so much on offer, there will be a Wedding Zone, Chocolate Zone and Sugar Arts Zone, as well as a Live Global Cake Challenge, classes, demonstrations and competitions, and a Sugar Arts Fashion Show.

The Americas Cake and Sugarcraft Fair will take place 18th-20th September at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando. To find out more, head to www.cakefair.com.



... The Great British Bake Off 2015

Our favourite show is back on TV soon and we're really excited! We can't wait to see the amateur bakers that will be competing in this sixth season of The Great British Bake Off. We're looking forward to weekly instalments of signature bakes, technical challenges and spectacular showstoppers - and of course, the puntastic Mel and Sue. All out to impress judges Mary Berry and Paul Hollywood, it can get a bit tense in the Bake Off tent - will there be another Baked Alaska 'Bin-gate'? You'll have to tune in to find out!

The Great British Bake Off 2015 is coming soon to the BBC in August 2015.

For more information and preivews visit www.thegreatbritishbakeoff.co.uk



Image Credit: BBC/Love
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CLASS REVIEWS

Cloudberry Cakes

Welcomed is the best word to describe how I felt upon meeting Joanna Hunt, owner and founder of Cloudberry, and upon entering her school and home in Plymouth. Joanna's friendly and relaxed approach is a perfect match for the setting of her classes: St. Michael's Lodge, a beautiful Foulston designed Georgian manor house set in country style grounds, just a five minute drive from Plymouth's town centre. After working as a food buyer for major food retailers for over twenty years, Joanna decided to take some time back, start a family and return to the peaceful city she grew up in. Her passion for food and crafts led her to found Cloudberry, a hub for creative cake decorating in the West Country.

With two rooms dedicated to Cloudberry classes at the front of the Georgian villa, Joanna first brought me into the lounge area, where some of the cakes from her classes are on display. An introduction to the content of the class was given in this comfortable setting, with tea and freshly baked chocolate brownies. I was here for a Hand Painting half day class, and a bit nervous as my drawing and painting skills have never been my strong point. Joanna was quick to note that a lot of the people who attend this class think they can't paint, but yet go away with six cupcakes they are very proud of. She used odd pieces of fabric and wallpaper with floral designs as examples of inspiration, and encouraged me to look closely to show me how colours are used and built up to create the impression of flowers.

After this calming introduction, we moved into the main classroom. Joanna began the class by explaining the mediums used to paint cakes, and the reasons behind her preference for painting with cocoa butter and edible dusts. With six cupcakes ready to paint, Joanna took

me through five different designs and then left the final cupcake for me to be creative with. Tiny roses were the first flower we painted, which were used to create a cute bunting design, and then each flower increased in difficulty to finish with the large rose. Despite my worries about my painting ability, I found painting the cupcakes very therapeutic. Joanna is a patient and kind teacher. From following her demonstrations and the steps she provided, I was surprised at how good my cakes looked for a first attempt. It was lovely to be taught by someone who filled her class with hints and tips whilst creating a relaxing atmosphere.

A visit to one of Cloudberry's classes would be a great addition to any cake maker's holiday to the West Country. Joanna hosts an array of classes including Butter Cream Piping and Royal Icing half day classes, and Celebration Cake and Sugar Flowers full day classes. She also hosts guest tutors having had Sarah Jones, from Chocolate Strawberry, a few times and some more acclaimed cake decorators coming soon.

To find out more or to book a class, visit: www.cloudberrycakes.co.uk or check out their Facebook page.

***"Despite Joanna's vast knowledge on all things baking and decorating, she welcomed any and all questions; none were too small or big. She shared tips and tricks and I got a real sense that she wanted her students to find enjoyment in baking and decorating. Joanna's instructions were simple and clear and we were all guided to a result that was beautiful and impressive."* - Leanne**



Recommended Classes

Sugar Design

Sugar Design is run by Liz Ungless who has been a sugar crafter, demonstrator and teacher for over 25 years. Classes are held regularly from her purpose built studio, but she is happy to travel to share her knowledge and does so on a regular basis. To ensure that everyone gets personal attention, classes are kept to a maximum of six. Although Liz's passion is for sugar flowers, she teaches all aspects of sugarcraft, including royal icing and a cake basic session. During the school holidays, there are a few classes aimed at children, including cupcake decorating and animal modelling.

For more information, visit: sugardesign.co.uk

Amelie's Kitchen

Amelie's Kitchen is owned and founded by cake designer Helen Ward, who in January of 2015, won the National award for Best Wedding Cake Designer at The Wedding Industry Awards. Helen teaches from her home based kitchen in Suffolk. In the two day, three-tier wedding cake class, students cover ganaching techniques, sharp edges, ruffling, lustring and modern sugar flower making. Helen also offers a Modern Sugar Flower Making class, a Single Tier Sharp Edged Cake Class and a Vintage Cupcake Decorating Class.

For more information, visit: www.amelies-kitchen.co.uk



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Nostalgic Fun

Afternoon Tea @Cloud 23 and Richmond Tearooms MANCHESTER

Travel - Taste - Try



AFTERNOON TEA IN THE CLOUDS @ CLOUD 23

What can you say about an afternoon tea served in a fully glass-enclosed venue, high atop a hotel overlooking all of Manchester? Well, the views alone were to die for, but the "Afternoon Tea in the Clouds" offered by Cloud 23, at Hilton Deansgate Hotel, was just as glorious as the views. For the version of AT that I was lucky enough to enjoy with Emma Ball, of Richard's Cakes, and Tracey Rothwell, of Little Cherry Cake Company, we were treated to a wonderful "nostalgic" AT version, complete with Caramacs and sherbet candies! I personally loved the gorgeous presentation of Cloud 23's AT - the lovely morsels all stacked on a cool and modern cake stand, and I must say that the service was outstanding! Even the seats and pillows were ultra luxe and comfy, so yes - we could have whiled away the whole afternoon there... And we did. Because the ambiance of Cloud 23 is a mix of modern luxury and trendy/stylish interior design, we were totally able to relax and chill out AND enjoy so many laughs and giggles. Stuffy afternoon tea this is not, I'm glad to report.

The super-tasty menu consisted of:

- Strawberry Jam Tart accompanied with Rhubarb and Custard shot glass
- Corner Shop 10p pick-a-mix (Fruit Salads, Black Jacks, Swizzle Lolly, Jelly Beans - all

served in sweetie bag)

- Lemon Sherbet Macarons
- Chocolate Button Brownie Cupcakes
- Chocolate Vermicelli Scones
- Bubblegum Milkshake
- Peanut Butter Sandwich
- Cheese and Branstion on Hovis Bread
- Hot Dog, Brioche split roll accompanied with Ketchup and Crispy Onion
- Quiche Lorraine
- Mushroom Vol au Vent

My faves were the hot dog (sooooo good in the brioche roll with the crispy onion topping) and the various pastries - and Emma, not-only-a-pretty-face and skilled caker, but also a former pastry chef, gave high marks on the quality of the shortcrust pastry! The bubblegum milkshake and the sweetie bag treats were all great compliments to the delicious food. It was really lunch and dinner combined! You also have a choice of fine-leaved teas to choose from; I opted for the rich English breakfast tea option. I should be more adventurous sometimes, but this tea was perfect with the pastries and sweets.

If you're ever in the Manchester area, this is such a great spot to enjoy a fantastic afternoon tea, AND to get your sight-seeing on. Ooh, I almost forgot to mention that they also offer various cocktails (and non-alcoholic drinks) to accompany your fab AT.



A LITTLE WHIMSY AND A WHOLE LOTTA FUN!

I walked into the Richmond Tearooms in Manchester and was like, WOW! It's literally like you're walking onto an Alice in Wonderland stage set, or a fabulously shabby-chic conservatory, depending on where you sit. At the time of our visit, David and team were busy building yet another gorgeous room towards the back of their tearooms, which looked like it was going to be just as magical! I really can't wait to get back here.

But what about the afternoon tea, you ask? Well, once you're done ogling all of the fab décor and cakes on display, you are very much spoiled for choice. One thing we really loved about our visit – and by “we”, I mean Emma Ball, from Richard's Cakes, and Tracey Rothwell, from Little Cherry Cake Company – was the variety of ‘sizes’ of afternoon teas on offer. Their published menu consists of:

Richmond Tea

Large scone with clotted cream and Tiptree jam
Selection of four small delicious cakes and pastries
Four finger sandwiches - vegetarian or meat option
Freshly brewed leaf tea or coffee
A glass of Champagne

Queen's Tea

Large scone with clotted cream and Tiptree

jam

Selection of four small delicious cakes and pastries

Four finger sandwiches - vegetarian or meat option

Freshly brewed leaf tea or coffee

Hatter's Tea

Large scone with clotted cream and Tiptree jam

Four finger sandwiches - vegetarian or meat option

Freshly brewed leaf tea or coffee

Alice's Tea

Large scone with clotted cream and Tiptree jam

Freshly brewed leaf tea or coffee

HOWEVER – there is also a very generously-sized and super-filling “Gentleman's Afternoon Tea” on offer, which includes a pint of beer, fish fingers and chips!! In addition to a sausage roll, Eccles cake, sandwiches and a Scotch egg! Seriously, it was probably enough for two people to share, though I did manage to eat it all on my own!

Everything was obviously freshly made to order, and had that homemade/fresh-outta-the-oven taste, which may go some way to explaining why the place was absolutely packed, even on a weekday! I would definitely recommend calling them or emailing info@richmondtearooms.com to reserve; Lisa, David and the team there will welcome you with open arms!

Richmond Tearooms
15 Richmond St, Manchester M1 3HZ
+44 (0)161 237 9667
www.richmondtearooms.com



Photography: Jen's Just Desserts



Bleeding Hearts (Vanilla, Rose and Strawberry Cakes)

The name may be cheesy, but that is the only criticism you could make of these cakes, which are as pretty on the outside as they are within. Cut open to reveal the red heart of the matter.

Makes 6

FOR THE CAKE BATTER:

140g unsalted butter
200g icing sugar
110g ground almonds
50g plain flour
Seeds from ½ vanilla pod
120g egg whites

FOR THE FILLING:

6 tsp strawberry and rose jam, or ordinary strawberry jam with a couple of drops of rose water added

FOR THE ICING:

170g icing sugar
1–2 strawberries (or ½ tsp strawberry jam)
½ tsp rose water
A few vanilla seeds (¼ pod) or 1 tsp vanilla extract
1 tbsp glucose or honey

1. Melt the butter in a small pan on a high heat and cook until it starts to foam, turns golden and catches a little at the bottom, then remove from the stove.

2. A food processor will give the best results for these cakes (if you don't have one, you can make the batter by hand, but you will need to be quite vigorous). Place the dry ingredients and vanilla seeds in the food processor and mix together. With the food processor running, pour in the egg whites in a constant steady stream and mix to combine thoroughly. Follow with the hot burnt butter, pouring it slowly into the processor as it works, making sure to scrape in the sticky brown bits at the bottom of the saucepan too – they add great flavour. Set the batter in the fridge to cool for at least an hour (and up to a week).

3. When you are ready to bake, preheat the oven to 190°C/375°F/gas mark 5. Lightly grease the silicone moulds with butter spray (if using metal moulds, lightly butter and flour them). Divide the batter between the moulds. It should reach about 2cm below the top. Insert a teaspoonful of jam into the heart of each one: simply use the teaspoon to push some batter aside, then slide the jam off. As you pull the spoon out, the batter should rise up and cover the jam.

4. Place the moulds on a baking tray and bake for about 25–30 minutes until the smell is irresistible and the cakes are set to

the touch (in this case, you can only test the edges as the centre will sink because of the jam underneath). Lay a large piece of baking parchment on top of the tins, set a baking tray on top of that, and very carefully flip them over and allow to sit for 20 minutes.

5. Mix the icing ingredients together in a bowl, squashing the strawberries a little to extract their juice and colour. The icing should be the texture of thick honey, so if it seems a little thick, add a couple of drops of water.

6. Remove the cakes from the moulds and leave to cool entirely on a wire rack before spooning or piping the icing on generously. Let the natural flow of the icing gently trickle down the sides and set. If you want, you can top each one with some fresh rose petals or a strawberry. Once set, these keep at room temperature for 2–3 days, staying lovely and moist.

HONEY & CO: The Baking Book by Itamar Srulovich and Sarit Packer, Published by Hodder & Stoughton 2015, Photography by Patricia Niven



Prosecco, Strawberry and Popping Candy Truffles

Homemade chocolate truffles are deceptively easy to make, yet so impressive. The perfect little treat for popping into your mouth when you're sitting on the sofa, after dinner, or if you are planning a decadent high tea. Everyone's heard of Champagne truffles, but these use our fave fizzy Italian tippie – Prosecco.

Makes 25

FOR THE TRUFFLE GANACHE:

280g good quality dark chocolate (70%)
250ml double cream
50g unsalted butter
100ml Prosecco (drink the rest of the bottle while eating your truffles)

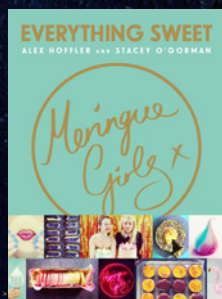
FOR COATING:

60g freeze-dried strawberries
60g coated popping candy, or normal 'Fizz Whiz' popping candy

1. Line a large baking tray with baking paper.
2. Start by making the truffle ganache. Break the chocolate into squares and place in a large glass bowl. Heat the cream and butter in a saucepan over a low heat and stir until the butter is melted. Let the cream reach a gentle simmer then pour over the chocolate, whisking until it's completely melted. Add the Prosecco and whisk until combined. Pour the lot into a lined shallow tin and refrigerate for at least 4 hours, and preferably overnight.
3. Mix your freeze-dried strawberries and popping candy together on a large plate and set aside.
4. To shape the truffles, dip a melon baller or teaspoon into a cup of boiling water. Scrape up balls of ganache, reshaping them with your hands if necessary. Drop them on to the plate of freeze-dried strawberries and popping candy, rolling them around to get an even coverage. Repeat until you've used all the ganache. Place the truffles on a baking tray lined with baking paper and chill in the fridge for about 30 minutes before enjoying.

Coated popping candy doesn't absorb the moisture of the truffles, so the 'POP' stays until you bite into them. Uncoated 'Fizz Whiz' works well but absorbs the moisture, so these are best eaten quickly. If you prefer to keep your truffles simple, just roll them in good quality cocoa powder.

*Everything Sweet by The Meringue Girls: Alex Hoffer and Stacey O'Gorman
Published by Square Peg
Photography by David Loftus*



Viennese Whirls



These oh-so-buttery, melt-in-the-mouth biscuits are lovely sandwiched together with buttercream and jam. For a simpler version, pipe out the whirls and bake them, then drop a small teaspoon of raspberry jam into the centre of each without sandwiching the biscuits together.

Makes 15

250g butter, softened
200g plain flour
100g cornflour
100g icing sugar
1 tsp pure vanilla extract
Icing sugar, to dust

FOR THE FILLING:

100g vanilla icing sugar
50g tbsp butter, softened
50g raspberry jam
2 baking sheets lined with baking parchment
Piping bag fitted with a star nozzle

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
2. Mix the butter, flours, icing sugar and vanilla together until the mixture forms a smooth dough.
3. Spoon the mixture into the piping bag and pipe 30 small ovals, about the size of a small egg, onto the prepared baking sheets, leaving a little space for spreading between each one. I like to do this in a figure of eight for a really pretty pattern.
4. Bake in the preheated oven for about 15 minutes until golden. Remove from the oven and leave to cool for a few minutes, then transfer to a cooling rack until completely cold.
5. In the meantime, to make the buttercream filling, simply beat the vanilla icing sugar and butter together in a large mixing bowl until smooth.
6. Sandwich the biscuits together with a little jam and buttercream and dust lightly with icing sugar before serving. Store in an airtight container or cookie jar and eat within 3 days.

*The Cookie Jar by Liz Franklin
Published by Ryland, Peters and Small
Photography by Kate Whitaker*

Orange Blossom and Marmalade Cakes



The quadruple orange dose in these cakes – in the form of fresh orange, orange marmalade, orange blossom water and orange syrup – gives them the most delicious smell. The soft, slightly crumbly texture and bright orange flavour make them not only a good companion for tea or coffee, but also a great dessert to end a meal. I love to fill the centre of the bundts with rich Greek yogurt and an extra teaspoon of marmalade, but you can have them just as they are.

Makes 6 small flower shaped bundt cakes (or 1 classic 1kg bundt)

FOR THE CAKE BATTER:

200g unsalted butter, at room temperature
250g caster sugar
Seeds from ½ vanilla pod or 1 tsp vanilla essence
Zest of an orange
60g ground almonds
4 eggs
200g plain flour
60g semolina
1 tsp baking powder
Pinch of salt
60g whole orange marmalade
2 tsp orange blossom water

FOR THE SYRUP:

Juice of 1–2 oranges (about 60g/ml)
150g caster sugar
100g water
1 tbsp orange blossom

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C/375°F/gas mark 5. With this cake, I advise using old fashioned metal bundt tins, as the crust that forms is great and you will get a lovely shape for the cakes. Lightly grease the tins with butter spray, or lightly butter and flour them if you prefer.

2. I use an electric mixer with a paddle attachment to make the batter, but if you don't have one, you can make it by hand. Cream the butter, sugar, vanilla,

orange zest and almonds together until they start to fluff up and stick to the sides of the bowl, but don't overwork or allow the mixture to go white. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and mix in the eggs one at a time, making sure each is fully combined before adding the next. Add the flour, semolina, baking powder, salt, marmalade and orange blossom water and combine to a nice, even consistency. Take care to not over-mix as this can result in a tougher texture that isn't as nice to eat.

3. Pipe or spoon the batter into the tins – you end up with about 150g in each (or use a single large bundt tin). For the small cakes, bake for 10 minutes then turn the tins around and leave for a further 10–12 minutes, until just set to the touch. They will firm up later so don't be tempted to leave them in the oven for longer. (If you are using a large bundt, it will need an additional 15–20 minutes until it is set.)

4. While the cakes are baking, mix the orange juice, sugar and water together in a small saucepan and bring to the boil over a high heat. Skim any impurities that form on top and continue boiling for a minute. Remove from the heat and add the orange blossom water.

5. As soon as the cakes come out of the oven, brush generously with the syrup and allow to soak in. Repeat until you have used all the syrup. Don't be tempted to leave any – it may look like a lot but it will be absorbed and make the cakes like little syrupy rum babas (without the rum). Flip the tins as soon as you can handle touching them and gently release the cakes onto a wire cooling rack. These keep well for up to 3 days (because of the syrup) and are best kept at room temperature, rather than in the fridge.

6. If you fancy my serving idea, fill the centre of each cake with Greek yogurt and a touch of marmalade. Alternatively, simply serve the yogurt on the side.

HONEY & CO: The Baking Book by Itamar Srulovich and Sarit Packer, Published by Hodder & Stoughton 2015, Photography by Patricia Niven

Fairy Floss Cake

This lemon and raspberry cake is citrusy, sour and sweet. We've decorated it with Pashmak Persian fairy floss, which is made from sesame and sugar, and is a revelation for us – it comes in loads of lovely flavours like pistachio, orange blossom, rose and saffron. It's a wonderful thing to decorate with. Truffles, Eton mess and cakes will always have room for a little fairy floss.

Serves 12

FOR THE CAKE:

400g unsalted butter, slightly softened
400g caster sugar
8 eggs
400g self raising flour
75ml whole milk
Zest of 2 unwaxed lemons
180g raspberries (frozen works well, but fresh are delicious)

FOR THE BUTTERCREAM BASE:

280g unsalted butter
560g icing sugar
3-4 tbsp milk

FOR THE YELLOW BUTTERCREAM:

2 tbsp good quality lemon curd
Yellow food colouring

FOR THE PINK BUTTERCREAM:

Handful of fresh raspberries, squished
Pink food colouring

TO DECORATE:

Pashmak Persian fairy floss, or regular fairground candy floss
Yellow and pink ombré chocolate disks (see below)
Indoor sparklers

1. To make the lemon and raspberry sponges: Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 6 and line the base of two 18cm cake tins with baking paper, greasing the sides with butter.

2. Beat the butter and sugar in a large bowl until pale and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time, scraping the sides of the bowl to make sure everything is well mixed. Sift in the flour, then fold in the milk, lemon zest and raspberries. Be careful not to over-mix the batter – you want to keep it as light, fluffy and airy as possible.

3. Divide the mixture evenly between the prepared cake tins and smooth over with a palette knife. Bake in the oven for 30-40 minutes until golden brown and springy. Leave to cool for about 15 minutes before turning out on to a wire rack to cool completely.

4. To make the buttercream:

Using a handheld whisk, electric whisk or stand mixer, whip the butter and icing sugar together until they are light and fluffy, adding milk to loosen. You want your buttercream to be spreadable but firm.

5. Divide the buttercream between two bowls. To one bowl, add the lemon curd and yellow colouring to give a lovely lemony pastel yellow shade. To the other bowl, add a handful of

squished raspberries and pink colouring to give a bright pink. Don't mix completely – that way it has a nice marbled effect.

6. To assemble:

Layer the sponges using your lemon and raspberry buttercream alternately, plus any extra lemon curd.

7. To ice, use a palette knife to spread thick smears of pink and yellow icing randomly all over the outside of the cake. Make sure you clean your palette knife in between scooping the buttercream. Decorate with fairy floss in the centre and surround with pink and yellow ombré chocolate disks.

8. Dim the lights and bring out the sparklers!

Ombré Chocolate Disks

These little chocolate disks finish off the cake beautifully. They also look fabulous lined up in a box as a gift.

Makes 24

200g high quality white chocolate, chopped

into very small pieces (or use tempered white chocolate drops or candy melts, which don't need to be tempered, if you are in a hurry)
Oil based food colouring (but use sparingly or it could affect the taste)

Equipment:

24-hole silicone mini muffin tin

1. First, you need to temper your white chocolate. Working very quickly, add touches of colour to the mix. Fill a few moulds about 0.5cm thick with this paler chocolate, then gradually add more colouring to the bowl of chocolate. As you proceed, fill a few more moulds with each shade to build up the ombré effect. Leave to set at room temperature then pop the chocolates out of the bases.

2. Package up in an ombré fade cellophane sweetie bag, or line them up on top of a cake.

Everything Sweet by The Meringue Girls: Alex Hoffler and Stacey O'Gorman, Published by Square Peg, Photography by David Loftus



Lemon and Vanilla Yogurt Hearts with Fondant Icing

Fondant icing sugar is available from large supermarkets and specialist cake decorating shops, but you could also use the ready to roll fondant icing and simply knead in a drop or two of food colouring before rolling out.

Makes 20

200g plain flour
Pinch of salt
90g tbsp butter
Seeds from a vanilla pod
1 tsp finely grated lemon zest
50ml thick plain yogurt

FOR THE FONDANT ICING:

175g fondant icing sugar
Red food colouring
2 baking sheets lined with baking parchment
Heart shaped cookie cutters in various sizes
1-2 disposable piping bags

1. Firstly preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
2. Put the flour and salt into a large mixing bowl and add the vanilla seeds and lemon zest. Mix well. Rub in the butter until it is thoroughly incorporated. Stir in the yogurt and bring the mixture together to form a soft dough.
3. On a clean, lightly floured work surface, roll the dough out into a large rectangle about 4mm thick. Cut out hearts with the cutters and arrange on the prepared baking sheets, leaving a little space for spreading between each one. Bring the trimmed dough together and roll out again to cut as many hearts out of the dough as possible. Arrange on the baking sheets with the other cookies.
4. Bake in the preheated oven for about 10 minutes until golden and firm. Remove from the oven and transfer to a wire rack to cool.
5. Mix 100g of the fondant icing sugar with enough water and food colouring to create a fairly thick paste, making sure it is a pretty delicate pink and not too Barbie pink.

Decorate the biscuits by creating a heart shape a little smaller than the shape of the biscuit, leaving a small border (you could use a piping bag for this or simply spread with a palette knife). Mix the remaining fondant icing sugar with enough water to make a thick paste and pipe little white dots to create a pretty outline around the pink sugar icing.

6. Leave to set, store between layers of baking parchment in an airtight container or cookie jar and eat within 3 days.

*The Cookie Jar by Liz Franklin
Published by Ryland, Peters and Small
Photography by Kate Whitaker*



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Tuscan Illusion Cake Tutorial

by Nasa Mala
Zavrzlama



Pastry chef and co-owner of Nasa Mala Zavrzlama patisserie, Vasilije Vasiljevic is the creator of this fantastic tutorial. From Belgrade, Serbia, Vasilije graduated from pastry school and became an apprentice in one of the oldest patisseries in Belgrade soon after. For the last decade, he has been creating amazing creations mixing cake decoration with painting. His hobbies are painting, photography and he loves to find inspiration everywhere around him.

Equipment Required

- Waxed paper
- Wilton round tip 1A
- Rolling pin
- Scissors
- Ruler
- X-acto knife
- Brushes: 1, 2, 10
- Wilton modelling tools: 5, 7, 13
- Ball tool
- Paint palette
- Round pans: 6", 8", 10"
- Blossom plunger for small flowers
- Vodka
- Thumb pins
- Flower modelling paste
- Dust food colours: Christmas Red, Egg Yellow, Maple Leaf Green, Chocolate Brown, Navy Blue, Black
- Fondant imprint mat
- White sugarpaste



My sketch was inspired by several pictures, Tuscan cities and wedding couples. You can choose your own inspiration.

Step 1.

First, make three cakes using round pans 6", 8" and 10" wide and 5" high. When the cakes are properly chilled, use the biggest round pan to cut the front of the cake. Stack the chilled cakes from biggest to smallest and cut the front using the biggest pan (10") through all three tiers, starting from the top of the cake. Separate the tiers, prepare and cover with fondant. Stack them again so they fit together snugly. Roll out more white fondant to cover the front and sides of the cake in one piece.

Step 2.

You need to make the templates in the correct proportion for the scene that you are making. Measure your stacked cakes so that you can understand the proportions.

Step 3.

Prepare the scene by drawing templates on the waxed paper (buildings, wedding couple and fence).

Steps 4a & 4b.

Roll out sugarpaste to about 4mm thick. Using the templates and ball tool (or toothpick), trace outlines on sugarpaste.

You can use pins to hold the sketches in place.

Step 5.

Cut around the templates using an X-acto knife.

Step 6.

Cut out all your templates and leave to dry for 48 hours or more, depending on weather conditions, on a flat surface.

Step 7.

For the fence, you can use the smallest round baking pan, or a round cutter to dry the sugarpaste with a curve.

Clouds:

Steps 8a-d.

Roll out sugarpaste to about 4mm thick. Using both sides of the round tip, cut the cloud shape with round movements, free handed, without any specific template.



Steps 9a & 9b.

To make the clouds look more realistic, make an indentation with the round tip.



Step 10.

You will need to make a lot of clouds to cover the whole cake. Leave to dry for 48 hours.



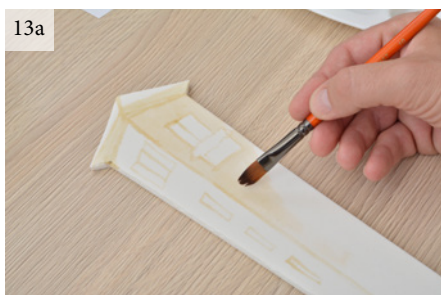
Painting the towers:

Step 11.

Mix dust food colours with vodka. You will need to achieve a watercolour effect.

Step 12.

Using well dried fondant and with light brown, draw and lightly sketch a roof, windows and doors with a thin brush. Make borders and draw windows, doors, rocks and bricks.



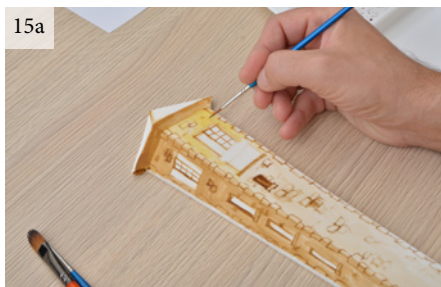
Steps 13a-c.

Using a thick brush, paint back over with the same light brown, then make some shades with darker brown.



Step 14.

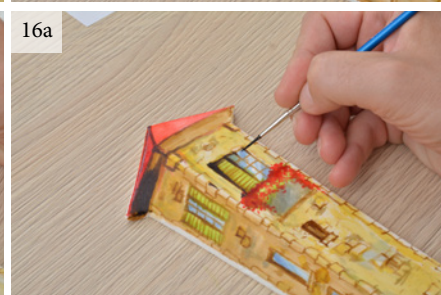
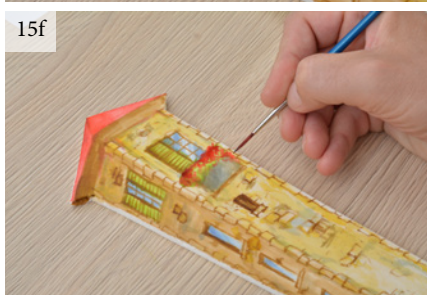
Using a thin brush and a darker shade, draw in the detail of the windows, doors and brick detail.



Steps 15a-f.

Next, use light yellow to paint the sunny side of the buildings. With light blue, fill in the windows. Green and red should be used for painting the base for the blinds, leaves, roofs and flowers.





Steps 16a & 16b.

Finish with black, put accent on the edges, colour all the sides and draw fence. Use the same approach on all your buildings.



Colouring the fence:

Steps 17a-c.

With light brown, colour the back of fence. Put some shades with darker brown. For better results, use a ruler to draw lines with a thin brush and black colour. Add some details on the fence following the same scheme.



Colouring the couple:

Step 18.

Draw outlines with light brown on the couples.



Steps 19a-c.

Use a light black for the groom's suit and black for the hair and shoes. Use light blue for shadows on the wedding dress. With dark brown, make shadows on the faces. Draw a floral bouquet using a thin brush with darker green and red.



Step 20.

Your finished pieces should look like this.

**Colouring the clouds:****Steps 21a & 21b.**

Use a thick brush for lining clouds with light blue. Then with black, make shadows.

**Colouring the cake:****Steps 22a & 22b.**

Try to imitate sky using light blue with a thick brush to paint on the cake. Apply colour with wide horizontal strokes. With this method, colour all sides of the cake.

**Step 23.**

Next, roll out light brown fondant to about 4mm thick, to cover the cake board. Make some texture with an imprint mat (or use a round tip or wrinkly aluminum foil).

**Steps 24a-d.**

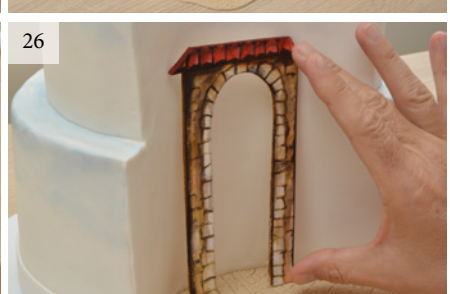
Coat the board with a thin layer of water and lay down the prepared and cut fondant.

**Step 25.**

Using the Wilton tool, make indentations to imitate stone blocks.

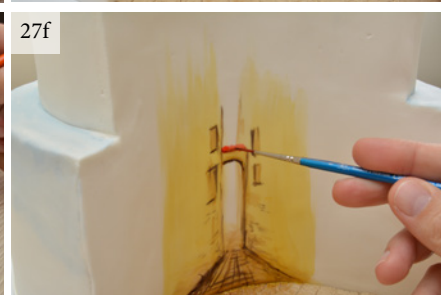
**Step 26.**

Lean the arch in the central position to define where on the cake we should draw buildings behind.

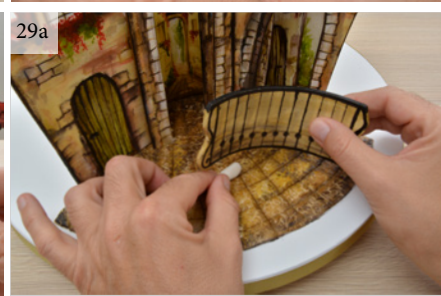
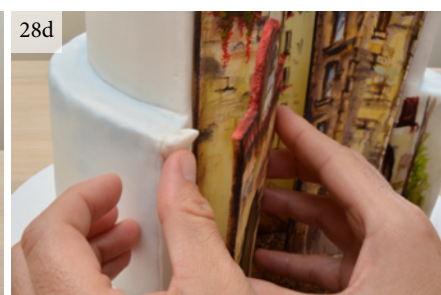
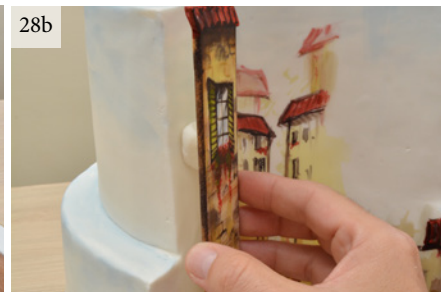


Steps 27a-f.

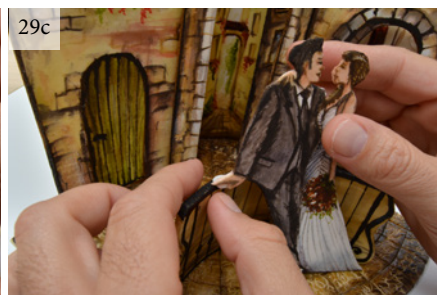
Using a thick brush, start painting the back scene. With light brown, paint the ground cobbled, while continuing on to the cake's back scene, to create the illusion of depth. Light yellow should be used for the buildings, windows and the main road. Make blinds with some darker brown and red for roofs.

**Steps 28a-e.**

Roll out marble sized balls and use them to attach the scenes onto the cake with a little water. Use the same technique for all buildings. The idea is to make a 3D illusion.

**Steps 29a-d.**

In the same way, attach the fence and wedding couple, gluing them together. Attach the fence to the cake board. Repeat the last steps with clouds. If you would like to add additional 3D details, you could make flowerpots and flowers.



Steps 30a & 30b.
Add the clouds in the same way, starting on the top tier. Place some of the clouds behind the buildings and around the back of the cake.

Step 31.
To finish, draw some hearts with red and birds with black, using a thin brush.

For more information, visit:
www.zavrzlama.net





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Dream Wedding Location Cakes



We are very excited to bring you a collection of wedding cakes, inspired by weddings from around the globe, from some of the best cake artists!

Jeanne Winslow Cake Design

"Venetian Wedding Cake. My piece was created using various features found in Venice, Italy. I chose to use gold peacock lace as the peacock represents a new beginning. I incorporated blue into the design to denote the famous canals using a Venetian plaster effect. The white textured tier with gold leaf cut outs characterises the ornate ceilings found throughout Venice. There are 30 gumpaste roses, all accented with edible gold leaf. The cake is topped with a lace covered wedding mask made from gumpaste and additional roses. The Cake Lace Fantasia mat and Symphony mould by Marvelous Molds were used."

Photography: Mike Conway - Mike Conway
Photography

Kristen Erich - Bliss Pastry

"If I were to choose my dream wedding location, I would definitely choose the Caribbean. It speaks to me personally and I dream of returning to that tropical paradise. This cake is inspired by the clear waters, sparkling sands and relaxed feel of island life. Nothing to do all day but walk through the sand, splash in the ocean and enjoy an abundance of sea life and peace. The Caribbean is truly the ultimate dream wedding location!"



Sandra Monger Cake Design

"A Cake for a New York Wedding. In this cake, I wanted to represent the contrasts between overlaying architectural textures and green spaces. A playful and striking colour palette was chosen to make it fun and a little abstract.

The buildings and trees were hand cut from rolled out flower paste and allowed to dry flat. Their patterning was piped in a hand drawn piping style and edible gold and silver leaf and edible lustre paints were used to create highlights. They were then fixed to the sides of the tiers with royal icing."

Photography: Robin Pakes





Tanya Halas - Cake Heart

"My theme is a Bohemian Wedding. I created a textured pistachio coloured base and then added sweet pea flowers along with berries and leaves, pulled from the head piece inspiration photo. I also incorporated doilies by creating dreamy dreamcatchers and topped off the piece with sprigs of lavender."



Daniel Diéguez - Fogar 12 Fogar

"Come with me to the place where Marilyn marries Elvis several times a year. Where you can see all the world's wonders together. The place with the most lights, spectacles and games on earth. Welcome to Las Vegas!"

Riany Clement - Bellaria Cakes Design

"Traditionally, Bollywood inspired cakes are made in bright colours in combination with golds. I wanted to mix up the tradition a bit, so I choose a royal navy blue and gold colour scheme. I really love how this cake turned out!"



Bryson Perkins

"The inspiration for my safari wedding cake comes from the many beauties of Africa, such as its beautiful landscapes, gorgeous handmade baskets, and stunning wildlife.

Featured on my safari wedding cake are two hand sculpted giraffes made from modelling chocolate and painted with gold powder.

Some techniques include string work, painting, moulding, and sculpting."



Myton Ouano - Antonio's Kitchen

"My inspiration for this piece is the simplicity of a Japanese garden; its beautiful foliage, minimal flowers and use of natural elements.

I incorporate some Japanese print patterns in this piece by using wafer paper printed with edible ink, and the rest is made of gumpaste and fondant. The lighted part represents the Japanese's love for lanterns and is also made from wafer paper."



Zorica's Cake Art by Hajnalka Mayor

"My theme was underwater wedding. With my design, I was trying to give back the feeling of what I saw on many beautiful underwater wedding photographs. I used wafer paper to make the orchids and the bride's skirt. Everything else is made from fondant and gumpaste. I usually ignore using moulds, but I'm happy I made some using my real shells at home, they were very handy for this design. The starfish are handmade."



Karen Keaney - Roses and Bows Cakery

"The inspiration behind my design was very much vintage! And I knew from the start it would have to be tall as I just love tall cakes. The bottom two tiers are made up of the bride and groom's vintage luggage. The globe represents their onward journey travelling the world together as they set off in their hot air balloon. Love is in the air!"



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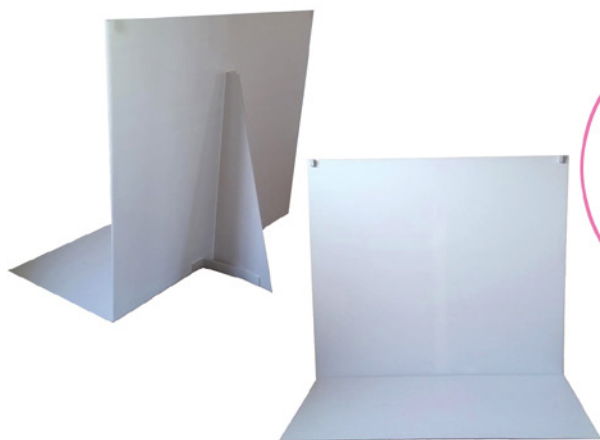


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Naked Cakes

by Jenny Budzynski, Miss Ingredient

Naked Cakes are really in trend and *Cake Masters Magazine* have a special feature for you from Jenny at Miss Ingredient, a cake artist who specialises in wedding cakes. Jenny tells us about her background, business and teaches us how to create that fabulously Naked Cake!

Tell us about the Naked Cake trend

Naked Cakes began to emerge in my order book in 2012. I had my first order for one that year. It was often said that they would be a passing phase, but their popularity grew and grew and I know that this year, I have even more booked than any of the previous years. Their popularity is understandable; they are beautiful, appetising, fresh and their organic natural look is very visually pleasing. The trend probably stemmed from the very popular vintage themes of weddings at the time, styles were very rustic and this style of cake just slotted in perfectly. Over recent years, their style has become more and more refined and the design ideas and variations have grown.

Tell us about your background

I started my wedding cake business when the youngest of my four children settled into school. Up until then, I had made cakes for friends and family. I now had more time to invest in developing my business and so I tentatively booked into a wedding show at a local hotel; this was a big step for me. It was a great way of giving me a goal and a deadline. I had been making cakes for many years and had trained as a chef when I left school, but by the booking of the wedding show, I was galvanised into action. I was so worried about presenting my cakes (and myself!) at the show but it was the best thing I ever did. The ball started to roll after that and I was inundated with orders.

Each year I have reviewed and fine-tuned my goals for the business. This last couple of seasons, I have achieved the right balance of workload, the types and styles of cakes that are requested and the work that I now attract. In the early days, I took every order that came along, even if I was already over booked, and made a huge range of designs that people asked for. Looking back, there was a lot of excitement at getting bookings but not much

order and control. Gradually over the years, I have built a portfolio of work that strongly represents my style. I have noticed that customers buy what they see so I recommend that if you have a strength and a specialty, then showcase those cakes. You will be found by brides looking specifically for those styles and likewise, if you don't like making something, then don't advertise it. Become an expert and try not to be everything to everyone.

What do you love about Naked Cakes?

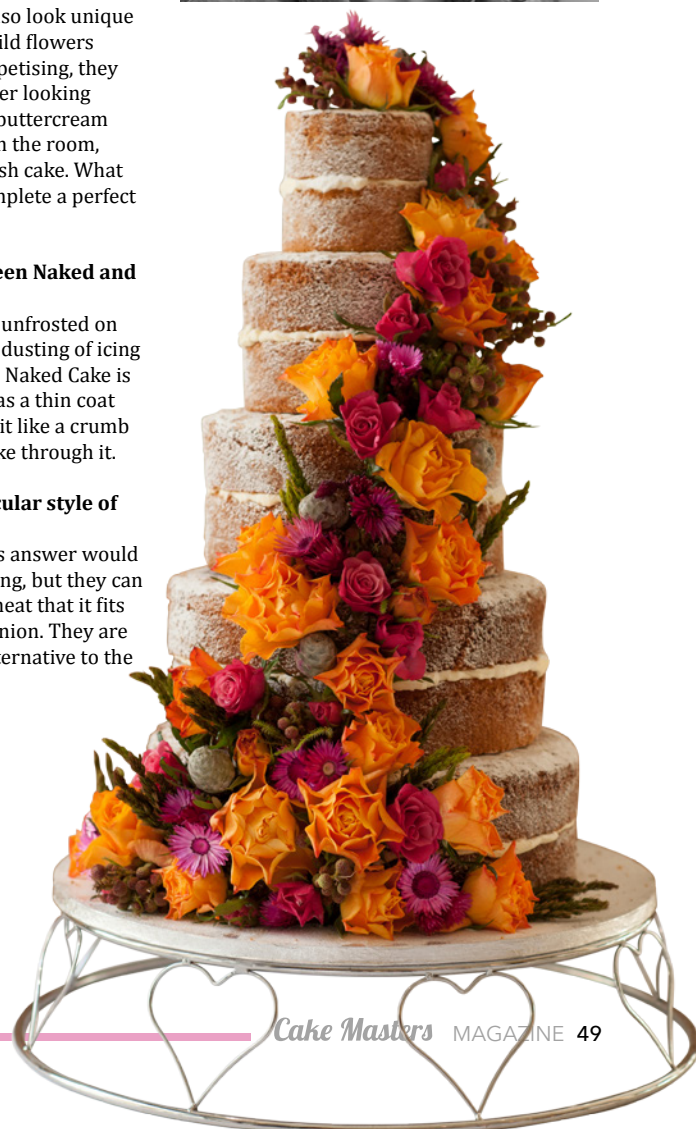
It is probably easier to list what I don't like about them, I just love everything about them and completely understand their enduring appeal! They are beautiful and fit into a decorated venue so perfectly when using flowers from the couple's florist to tie in with table centres. However, they also look unique decorated with herbs, some wild flowers and fresh fruit. They are so appetising, they literally make your mouth water looking at them, oozing their jam and buttercream fillings, and as they warm up in the room, guests can smell aromas of fresh cake. What more does anyone need to complete a perfect day!

What is the difference between Naked and Semi Naked?

Naked describes a cake that is unfrosted on the sides, perhaps it just has a dusting of icing sugar. The newest twist on the Naked Cake is the Semi Naked Cake, which has a thin coat of buttercream skimmed over it like a crumb coat so you can still see the cake through it.

Are Naked Cakes for a particular style of wedding?

Traditionally, the most obvious answer would be a rustic vintage style wedding, but they can be so smart, straight, tall and neat that it fits any style it needs to, in my opinion. They are a very modern and creative alternative to the traditional wedding cake.



HOW TO MAKE THE PERFECT NAKED CAKE

There really is nowhere to hide with a Naked Cake; it needs to be well made as there is no coat of icing to tidy things up. It is what is on the inside that counts and each tier must be very carefully prepared.

It looks simple to do – I have heard it be said, “just a few sponges stacked on one another” – but there are small and simple things that take it from looking like a toppling stack of pancakes to an impressive tall proud tower of wedding cake. Making an eye catching Naked Cake for a wedding takes skill, practice and confidence.

It begins with the baking: weighing the cake mix into the tins to ensure uniform sized sponges, followed by careful slow baking in lined tins to keep the crusts of the cake evenly coloured, then neat, straight measured cuts through the sponges ready for the fillings. Each sponge tier must be the same depth and completely level. Nothing untoward must catch the eye when the cake is finished. Dented or damaged sponge, the supporting cake boards peeping out between tiers or uneven depths or cuts will all catch the eye. Naked literally means unclothed and exposed and that is exactly what this cake is!

Preparing the sponge

Keeping the sponge from drying out is paramount. The cake looks so luscious and expectations are high so the cake must deliver; it needs to be fresh. Naked Cakes are best baked and prepared the day before the wedding so they are extremely fresh. They will sit for almost the entire day without a protective coat of icing and are exposed to the elements, so they need all the tricks of the trade to survive their day. I cut through the cake so there are at least three layers of filling in each tier and use syrups and coulis to retain the moisture in the sponge tiers. I set up as late as I can on the day and never place the cake in direct sunlight.

Best ways to decorate Naked Cakes

The best way to decorate the cake is with fresh or sugar flowers and fresh seasonal fruit. I use plastic posy picks to insert the stems into the cake layers and always ensure that the flowers are not toxic. Flowers look lovely in corsages around the cake or as a cascade and the fresh fruits perched on the tiers and the cake board complete the look.

Buttercream filling and how to avoid squishing

Never overfill the layers of jam and buttercream. If the cake has several cuts through it then there will be plenty of flavour without overfilling it. The cake needs stability and too much buttercream filling will make the cake unstable. So, use good quality ingredients with strong clear flavours, syrups and essences and there is no need to overfill the tiers to achieve the effect. The filling can be piped around the rim of each tier to give the appearance of it oozing out when actually it is perfectly controlled.



Coping with hot days

I deliver as late as I can and never place the cake in direct sunlight. If the cake is correctly doweled and not overfilled, it will have a good 'shelf' life. I do say to my customers that the cake will have a long day and perhaps, if it is very warm, it will need a short blast in the fridge before the catering staff cut it, but I do mean a short time of cooling as too long will just dry it out. I also advise that perhaps it would be ambitious to expect the cake to yield neat finger slices after a long hot day in a marquee or reception room – the cutting guide I give them will be slightly more generous.

Cake boards between tiers

My biggest dislike is seeing the edge of a shiny silver cake board between the tiers. I use a thin cake board that is smaller than the diameter of the cake and dowel the cake accordingly. I also cut the dowels to avoid any tiny gaps between the tiers. The cake looks like it is stacked and resting on the tier below, whereas there is really a strong scaffold of dowels supporting the weight. Again, it looks effortless but it does take some skill and patience to achieve the effect.

Attaching fresh or sugar flowers

Fresh or sugar flowers are perfect for the cake. I prefer the fresh flowers to be wired by the florist, which extends their life and stops them wilting, and I insert all the stems and wires into posy picks as I arrange them around the cake. The flower stems must not be inserted directly into the cake. Fresh flowers are perfectly safe as long as they are not toxic and are preferably organic, although organic flowers are not always easy to acquire. I also suggest herbs and edible flowers as a beautiful option alongside the fresh seasonal fruits.

Transporting and setting up your cake

I always set up my cakes at the venue as I find transporting them stacked is bad for my nerves! Naked Cakes would not travel well stacked and I transport the tiers in individual cake boxes, assemble the cake on site and decorate it in situ.

For more information, visit:
www.miss-ingredient.com
www.facebook.com/missingredient
www.twitter.com/jennyBcake
www.pinterest.com/missingredient

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Mich Turner MBE

Founder of Little Venice Cake Company and described as 'Cake Maker to the Stars', thanks to her award-winning designs and celebrity clientele, Mich Turner has worked as a consultant for luxury brands, is the author of five bestselling books and is a Satin Fine Foods Artist of Excellence.

First Steps

Q: If the bride doesn't know what she wants, what advice can I give her?

A: A skilled cake designer gently steers a bride through the selection process. Show examples of a range of different sizes, shapes, covering mediums, finishing techniques. Find out the logistics – the wedding location, number of guests and whether the cake will be served for pudding or later on with coffee and champagne. Think about flavours - offer tasting samples, taking into account the bride and groom's personal preferences, seasonality and the wedding breakfast menu. Try to include personal details - ask the bride about her dress, the colours and flowers for the wedding.

Styrofoam Spoilers

Q: Do you think it is cheating if a really tall wedding cake has some fake Styrofoam tiers?

A: Faux tiers are a practical and sensible inclusion to add to a wedding cake. They add additional dramatic height to a wedding cake design without the added expense or waste of having extra cake. They also create a more stable wedding cake for handling and assembly. The faux tiers can be made well in advance of the wedding, allowing for the fresh cakes for serving to be made as late as the day of the wedding.

Cake Fair

Q: We are looking forward to seeing you at the Satin Ice show, what are we going to see from you?

A: I am excited to be bringing the quintessentially British Red Carpet glamour of Downton Abbey meets Buckingham Palace to Florida! My on stage style blends entertainment with education, sprinkled with stories of my celebrity cakes. I would like to think everyone will go away having learned something and feel empowered to turn everyday bakes into show stopping cakes!

Bridezilla Battles

Q: How do you deal with bridezillas?

A: Every wedding is special and a highly

emotive day for all concerned. Every bride wants her day to be perfect and memorable. Instil confidence in the bride by reassuring her of your capabilities. This will help soothe even the most high-maintenance of brides. Be patient, keep cool and exude professionalism.

Sensational Settings

Q: Sometimes the setting for the wedding cake is forgotten about - should I provide the "setting"?

A: As the cake designer, be assertive. Ask the bride or event planner where the cake will be located and ensure you have booked in the correct sized table, cloth, flowers, knife and stand. Remember the first official role of the new bride is to cut the cake, so make sure you have set the stage!

Damage Control

Q: How do you deal with damage when setting up a cake?

A: Keep calm. Preparation and forward planning is the best precaution. Think what could go wrong and aim to avoid this or have a planned solution. Take a first aid kit with you. This should include extra royal icing or chocolate, piping bag, nozzle, ribbon, scissors and glue. Consider making extra faux replica tiers for very fragile designs as these can be substituted in a wedding cake in case of damage.

Pricing Guidance



Time

Base this on the complexity of the work and the time it will take you to make it properly – don't sell yourself short!

Delivery

Include cost of travel and the box you're delivering it in.

Overheads

Make sure you include the cost of running your oven, your mixer, your dishwasher...

Decorations

Other than sugarpaste and gumpaste, there are also colours, edible glue and other supplies to think of. Remember the piping bags, cake boards and dowels you use should be included too!

Cake Ingredients

Work out the cost of your ingredients from the size of the cake and the number of servings.

Word Search

D F L O W E R G I R L D Z J I
H I P W Y E S U U I B G X P E
B F A A T L D W D D S R V V E
B R L M M D S D Y S W O X O H
W O I O O Z Q E I X I O P R J
A A U D W N K K A N X M L S U
B X O Q E E D J Z L G T S E A
K G O E U Z R B G P T C Q L Q
A W A X B E O S Y P X E A I V
B C I V I Q T H P N X E R K F
E F W L F R Y D L D E V A F E
B I P Q B R I D E S M A I D S
C Z S C E R E M O N Y F R W C
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Bride

Groom
Ceremony
Diamond
Honeymoon
Kiss

Alter
Bouquet
Flower Girl
Vows
Bridesmaids



Blog Spotlight

Placing the spotlight on a blog that has caught our eye!



Blog: Cakewhiz

Blogger: Abeer Rizvi

Profile: 30 year old mum, living in Chicago, who spends her days making beautiful and delicious desserts.

Started: October 2010

Frequency: Twice a week

Content: Baking recipes, cake decorating tutorials and edible crafts for kids.

First Post: How to make cut out flower cupcakes.

Favourite Post: Pink velvet cake filled and frosted in seedless strawberry icing and topped off with fresh strawberry pieces.

Most Popular Post: How to make a blue velvet naked cake.

Described in three words: Fun, creative, colourful

www.cakewhiz.com

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Book & Tutorial Reviews

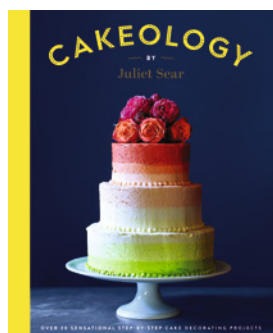
Elegant Lace Cakes
Zoe Clark
£15.99
David & Charles

Focusing on recreating lace on cakes, Zoe's latest book takes you through the steps for using a variety of techniques to create cakes of different difficulty. With decorations that involve royal icing, stencils, wafer paper, cut out and moulded sugarpaste, and edible lace, this book is a fabulous learning tool, as well as providing projects to create stunning wedding or celebration cakes. Each of the twelve themed cake projects are also accompanied by a tutorial for cupcakes, mini cakes or cookies, which would work really well as wedding favours or party gifts. It really is elegant!



Cakeology
Juliet Sear
£20
Hardie Grant

Bright, fun and colourful, Juliet Sear's new cake decorating book includes projects to suit every occasion. Each with step-by-step instructions and images, there are tutorials for novelty cakes and wedding cakes as well as cookie and cupcake decorating. With 24 projects, each categorised with a difficulty level that ranges from easy to advanced, this is a great book for new cake decorators who want a book that will progress with their skills. It also includes a comprehensive guide to everything else you need: a guide to technical jargon and cake sizes, plus basic recipes, decorating and stacking techniques.



Bellissimo Wedding Cakes
Helen Mansey
£21.99
B. Dutton Publishing

As a cake designer known for her elegant, contemporary style, Helen Mansey is a perfect candidate for learning to create wedding cakes with. This beautiful new book includes over 40 pages of information, recipes and techniques guides before even starting the tutorials, making it a thorough and useful guide to all levels of cake decorator. All followed by twelve lovely wedding cake designs, which are easy to create using the detailed tutorials that guide you through every step. The tutorials range from simple designs to the more complex and varied wedding cakes, involving sugarpaste, royal icing and sugar floristry work.



Gazebo & Doves Wedding Cake
Chef Serdar Yerner
\$39.95
Yernersway.com

A truly romantic wedding cake design is made achievable to create with this video tutorial. Serdar takes you through how to make this beautiful cake, from technically drawing the design and modelling the birds, to creating the pastillage gazebo structure and royal icing finishing decorations. With detailed instructions and the downloadable course instructions, which include the templates, it is possible to recreate the precision used by Serdar to decorate this cake. At three hours long, the tutorial is in real time and as Serdar gives so many tips and techniques, it is a really useful tutorial for intermediate cake decorators.



Cake Design Made Simple: The Wedding Dress, Rachael Teufel
50% OFF for Cake Masters readers at
£12.50/\$19.99
Craftsy.com/CM-Wedding

Demonstrating three different ways to use the wedding dress as the basis of cake design, this tutorial shows you how to make a cake designed directly from the dress, one inspired by aspects of the dress, and one based on the entire event. As well as taking you through aspects of making a wedding cake, such as carving and icing, making decorations, textures and embellishments, Rachael also gives her expert advice on how to work out the design, sketching it and how to communicate your ideas with the client. With nearly four hours of video split into ten lessons, this class is a great tool for making a wedding cake.



1920's Style Bride and Groom Topper Tutorial
Zorica's Cake Art
15 CAD
www.zoricascakeart.com

This bride and groom tutorial makes a lovely finishing touch for a Roaring 20s or Jazz Age themed wedding cake. With 200 step-by-step photographs, the tutorial gives really detailed and clear instructions on the process to make these figures. From a provided template, the figures are built up to create life-like characters with a real attention to detail. It's a great tutorial for an intermediate cake decorator looking for a stylish wedding topper, or as a development of modelling skills. The techniques learnt through this tutorial would be easily applicable to different styles of brides and grooms.



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Cake Hacks

Short cuts, tips and tricks!

DIY Fondant Textures

Here are some clever ideas for creating textured effects on your sugarpaste without buying embossing mats and tools – simply use things already in your kitchen!

Press or roll over netting used to wrap fruit and vegetable to create an impression on sugarpaste.



Roll over doilies or cake lace to create lace impressions in sugarpaste.



Stick foam shapes or use a hot glue gun to add shapes that transform your rolling pin into an embossing pin. Place wax paper on your fondant before rolling to ensure it's food safe.



Use both ends of a piping nozzle to make an overlapping circles effect.



Bake Clubs!

If you are interested in telling us about your bake club email: emily@cakemasters.co.uk



White Rose Sugar Art Club

'Our club is based in Bradford and meets monthly. We hold a variety of demonstrations and hands on workshops, covering everything from sugar flowers to modelling. It's all about meeting people with a common interest and sharing our knowledge and skills. Our members' ages range from nine to over ninety! It's a non profit organisation, so you can pay £3 for each meeting or £20 for the year. You can watch and learn from various demonstrators and also take part. We're happy for new members to just turn up on the night or call one of the committee.'

Next event: 11th September: Brush Embroidery Workshop

Contact: Diane
01274 603966

Facebook.com/WhiteRoseSugarArtClub



Contra Costa Cake and Sugar Art Society

'We meet on the second Thursday of each month, alternating venues between the First Lutheran Church in Concord and at Sugar Spun in Berkeley, California. The club was founded in May 2006 due to an increased interest in learning cake decorating techniques. At our meetings, we provide training, have demonstrations and hands on activities. We also provide homemade and decorated birthday cakes to children in foster care in association with Calico and CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates). Many of us have built close friendships and feel there is a community service aspect to the club.'

Next event: 8th August
Contact: Sandy, Linda and Pat
contact@cccsas.org
www.cccsas.org



North County Bakers Anonymous

'We are a San Diego based group ADDICTED to baking and eating delicious baked goods. We were reminiscing about childhood bake sales and began discussing how awesome it would be to taste other people's best home baked goods again. So we decided to start a meetup group. A club where baked goods addicts could come together to share their finest home baked goods. Each person or couple has to bring a home baked good of a specified category to share. We take an anonymous vote to determine which baked good was the best tasting. The winner gets to choose the category for the next meeting.'

Next event: 13th August
Contact: Greg and Jessica
groberson@classrealitygroup.com
Meetup.com search North County Bakers Anonymous

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“Vivanta” - Wedding Cake Tutorial

by Rumana Jaseel, incrEDIBLE art



My name is Rumana Jaseel. I am from Cochin, Kerala, India; born and brought up in Bangalore. I am the mother of three beautiful kids. My professional background is as a registered dietician but I've been baking since eighth grade and am a self taught cake artist. I've been a home baker in business since 2008 and founded incrEDIBLE art on Facebook in 2011. I'm now Managing Partner, Pastry Chef and Cake Artist at the six month old Incredible Art – Artisan Cake Boutique, Patisserie and Academy. I am driven by passion and am an avid lover of modern and French pastry art, chocolate work, dainty and pretty looking sugar flowers, and wedding cakes.



Equipment Required

- Cakes: 9", 7" and 5" x 6" tall, sheeted with fondant
- Air brushing system
- Acetate sheet strips – 2x 6"
- Shortening
- Royal icing
- Icing paper cone
- Single damask stencil
- Palette knife
- No 5 flat brush
- No 2 round brush
- Pair of scissors
- AmeriColor Pearl Sheen airbrush colour
- Ameri Color Electric Blue airbrush colour
- Dresden tool
- Cutting mat
- Cattleya orchid cutter set
- Orchid throat veiner
- Multipurpose petal veiner
- Wire cutter
- Floral foam pad
- Floral green tape
- 24 gauge white wire
- Rolling pin
- Edible glue
- Silver dust
- Apple Green petal dust
- Pastel Pink petal dust
- Daffodil Yellow petal dust
- Gumpaste



Step 1.
Sheet your cakes with fondant.

Decorating your 5" and 7" cakes:

Step 2.
Fill a paper cone with royal icing. Keep aside a cup of water to dab over rough surfaces that are peaked to give the royal icing a smooth finish.

Step 3.
Using the paper cone filled with royal icing, pipe along horizontal lines in an irregular fashion over the 7" cake.

Step 4.
Pipe dots on top of the piped lines with royal icing. Dab any rough and peaked dots with a dampened paint brush to give it a smooth finish.

Step 5.
Continue with the same technique for the 5" cake. Allow the cakes to dry.

Step 6.
Mix a few drops of Electric Blue colour into a few teaspoons of Pearl Sheen colour in a bowl.

Step 7.
Airbrush the 5" cake over the royal icing line to give it a shaded look.

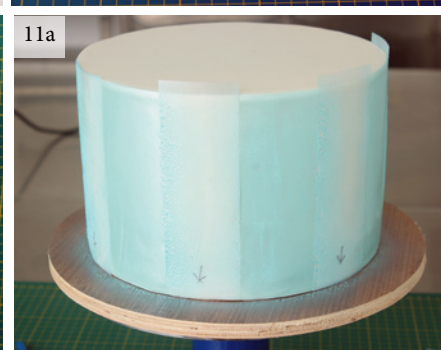
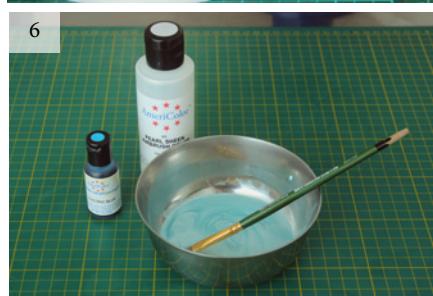
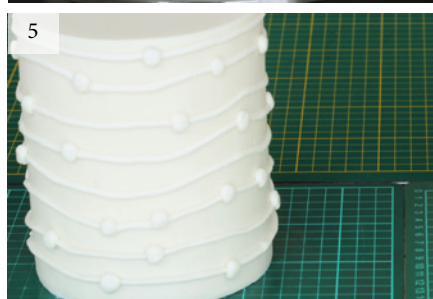
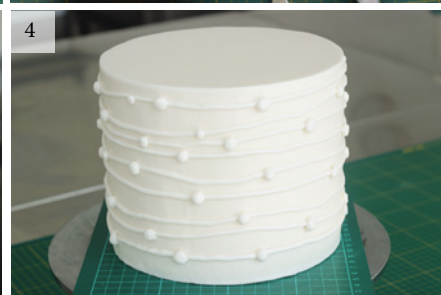
Double toned stencilling for the 9" cake:

Step 8.
Measure the height of the 9" cake.

Step 9.
Mark an arrow in one direction on the acetate strips with a permanent marker (this is just to make sure that we are using the straight cut end of the acetate strip).
Apply a thin layer of shortening all over the acetate strips.

Step 10.
Stick the acetate strips, one after the other, on the 9" cake with the arrow facing down.

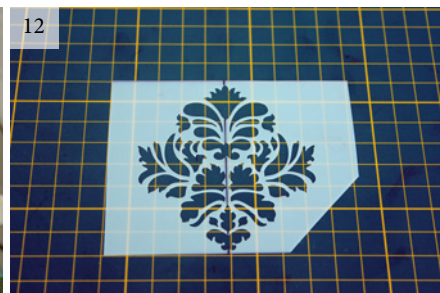
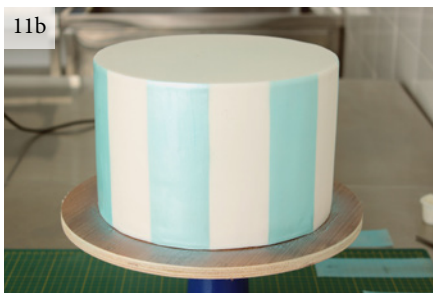
Steps 11a & 11b.
Remove alternate acetate sheets and airbrush using Electric Blue colour tinted with Pearl Sheen.



This is how the cake would look if all the acetate strips were removed. Blue and white striped.

Step 12.

Using a permanent marker, mark the centre of the single damask stencil.



Steps 13a & 13b.

Place the damask stencil on the cake so that one half of the stencil lies on the blue stripe and the other half lies on the white stripe covered with acetate strip.

Using a palette knife and a bench scraper, stencil with royal icing.



Step 13c.

Continue to stencil over the blue stripes. Allow to dry.



Step 13d.

This picture shows a progress shot after stencilling over the blue stripes.

Step 13e.

This picture shows the progress shot of how the cake would look after removing the acetate strips from the white striped portion.



Step 14.

Place the greased acetate sheets over the blue stripes.

Step 15.

Stencil the other half of the damask design over the white striped portion using blue coloured royal icing.

Step 16.

Remove the acetate sheets and allow to dry. Airbrush the cake with Pearl Sheen colour.



To make the Cattleya orchid:

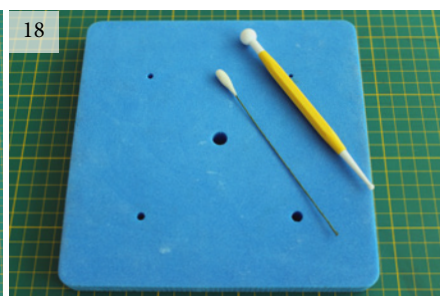
Step 17.

Assemble all the tools necessary to make the cattleya orchid.



Step 18.

Using a pea sized gumpaste ball, roll into a tear drop shape. Insert a damp green 22 gauge wire into the narrow end of the tear drop.



Step 19.
Keeping the wired tear drop at an angle on the foam pad, roll with the ball tool cupping and lengthening it out.

Step 20.
Using a pair of scissors, cut two ends of the tongue to make it look like a tongue with two horns.

Steps 21a & 21b.
Attach a grain sized gumpaste ball at the tip of the tongue. Using a veining tool, make an indentation running down the centre of the freshly attached portion. Allow the tongue to dry.

Step 22.
Dust the tongue with yellow and green at its base. Dust the tip of the tongue deeply with pink.

To make the orchid throat:

Steps 23a & 23b.
Roll out a paper thin piece of gumpaste, cut with the orchid throat cutter and vein using the orchid throat veiner. Ruffle the edges of the throat using a dresden tool and apply glue over the unruffled portion on two sides.

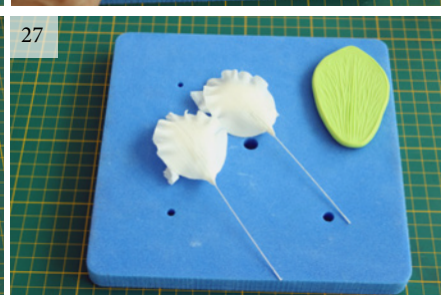
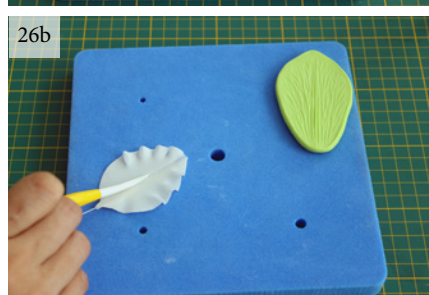
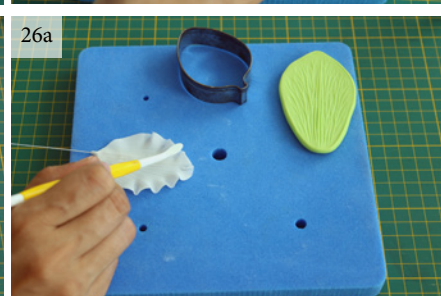
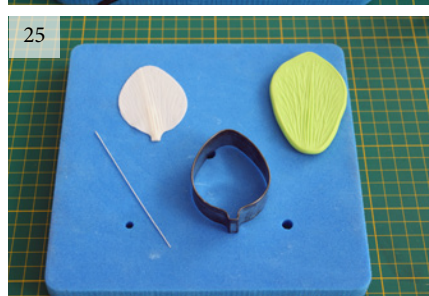
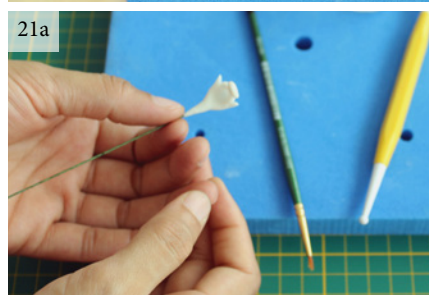
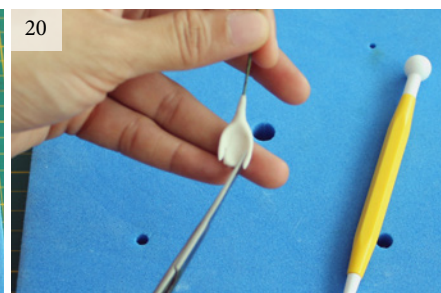
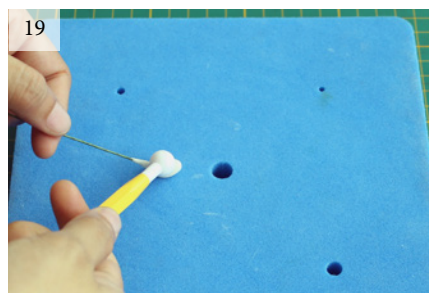
Step 24.
Keeping the tongue facing down, gently wrap the throat around the tongue. Open up the throat gently and allow to dry setting it on a piece of Styrofoam.

To make petals:

Step 25.
Roll out a piece of gumpaste, creating a central ridge to insert the wire either freehand or using a Celboard. Cut with the orchid petal cutter and vein using a multi purpose veiner. Insert 24 gauge white wire through the central ridge about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in. Pinch the base.

Steps 26a & 26b.
Create close ruffles on the petal using a dresden tool. Turn over and draw a central line running down the centre of the petal about half way.

Step 27.
Make two petals of the same kind and set them over a small piece of tissue paper or polyester fiber. The petal must take a convex shape with its tip flipping back a bit.

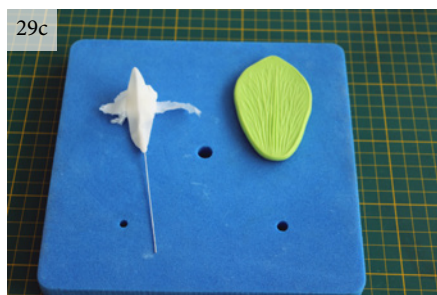
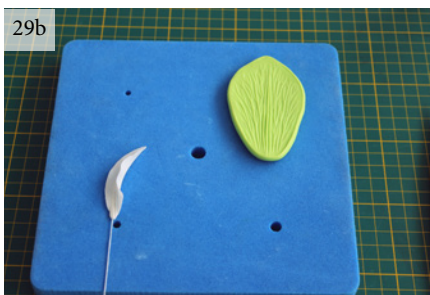
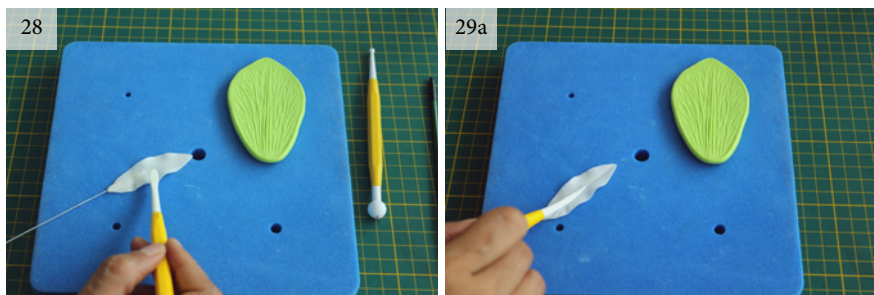


To make the sepals:**Step 28.**

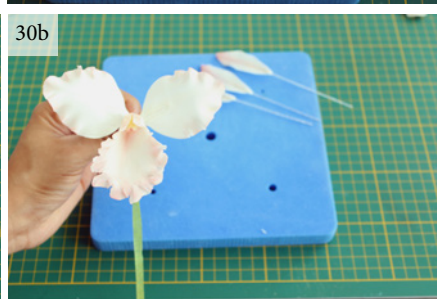
Roll out gumpaste with the ridge, cut with the sepal cutter and vein using a multi purpose veiner. Insert white wire. Thin the edges of the sepal and scoot once on either side with the dresden tool to give the sepal a lift.

Steps 29a-c.

Draw a line running down the middle of the sepal. Fold the sepal in half and set inverted over a piece of tissue paper.

**Steps 30a-c.**

Allow all the petals to dry then dust with pink down the edges of each part. Assemble the petals around the throat, followed by the three sepals. The petals must be in the 2 o'clock and 10 o'clock direction and sepals must be in the 12, 4 and 8 o'clock direction.

**Step 31.**

Airbrush the petal edges with silver dust diluted with clear alcohol. Make three Cattleya orchids.

Step 32.

Stack the cakes up and airbrush with Pearl Sheen colour. Attach silver lace around each tier and adorn the cake with sugar orchids on each tier.

For more information, visit:
www.facebook.com/INCREDIBLEART



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Everything Starts With Colour



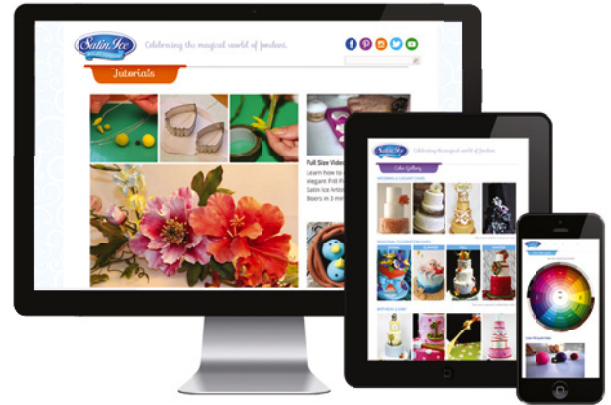
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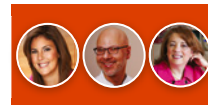
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Alternative

When your average bride and groom topper...
just isn't special enough!

Emma Ball - Richard's Cakes

When asked to design an unusual wedding couple, my first thoughts went straight to fantasy designs... mermaids, dragons, fairies... I love all styles of fantasy art so it was great to get the chance to create something myself! I decided to make fairies in a beautiful heart posy of flowers, a fun decoration to place on top of a unique wedding cake.



Federica Cipolla - Le Delizie Di Kicca

With this summery wedding cake, I wanted to show you my interpretation of a style that has inspired many artists: steampunk.



Nici - Sugar Lab

Photography: Ambra Di Marco

We say that to find love, we have to search for the second half of an apple. On this cake topper, the two halves have met. They are two different apples, but they combine together.



Sheila Honrado-Haughie - I Love Cakes by Sheila

A black wedding dress would be my version of a non-traditional wedding and so my wedding topper design evolved and became an angel and devil theme. I named this wedding topper "Devious Love". The devil lady is in love with this angel and wants to marry him. The angel refused and as he was trying to fly away, the devil lady's tail caught him by the leg.



Toppers

Yanira Anglada - Cake Therapy

I created the 'groovy kind of love' topper especially for this issue. I loved the idea of using objects to represent couples in love. I made three sketches, but a family survey proved this couple to be the most popular. I was inspired by the retro style of the iconic cars. While I was working on the piece, I kept thinking about "A Groovy Kind of Love" by Phil Collins, which is one of my favourite love songs.



Fiona Brook - Cakes by No More Tiers

Photo credit: Tim Brook Photo

The Mod scene is still very much alive and kicking in 2015, and these bride and groom sugar scooters would make the perfect cake toppers for a thoroughly Mod-ern wedding! Why not customise the rear number plates with the date of the wedding?



Angela Morrison - Cakes by Angela Morrison

Nature and everything that lives in it inspires me. I leave my feelings and my thoughts impressed on my work. He's a gentleman and she is a sweet soul, both are made for each other. Her lightness is transmitted on her ruffled ivory dress and his love is represented on his endless lovely sight. Love makes two, one!



Elina Prawito - Bake-a-boo Cakes

I wanted to make a bride and groom topper that is modern but also fun and cute. Most importantly, they need to reflect the bride and groom's personality.



Modern Décor Inspired Wedding Cake Tutorial

by Violet Lin Tran, The Violet Cake Shop



Violet is a stay at home mum of two who started baking as a way to create memories with her first child. On a whim, she decided to make her husband's milestone birthday cake seven years ago and has been immersed in a passion for designing and decorating cakes ever since. Currently, Violet creates cakes for personal occasions and some special collaborations or projects and has recently began teaching via online class tutorials such as Craftsby. Violet has had work featured in many publications and was recently honoured as one of Satin Ice's Artists of Excellence.

Equipment Required

- Ruler
- Two standard wooden dowels
- Strip cutter for ¼" width strips
- Strip cutter for ½" width strips
- Wheel cutter
- Paint brushes – various widths
- Scissors
- Craft or X-acto knife
- Small blossom cutter
- Small leaf cutter
- 1.5" circle craft punch or 1.5" circle cutter
- Floral tape in white
- 24 gauge floral wire in white, cut to 4" length; you will need 19 at this length or five full length wires
- Small silicone rolling pin with guidance bands or spacers

- Silicone strip mould for borders of peach tiers
- Coloured wafer paper – approximately three sheets
- White wafer paper – ten squares measuring 4"x4" (approximately two and a half sheets)
- Needle nose wire cutters
- Gold lustre dust
- Lemon extract or clear alcohol

Size of Cakes Used:

- 5" round x 6" tall
- 6" round x 3" tall
- 7" round x 8" tall
- 8" round x 4" tall



Creating the Wafer Paper Five Petal Origami Flower

Step 1. Cut out five squares of wafer paper measuring 4"x4" – this will make one full flower.

Step 2. Fold one square in half diagonally.

Step 3. Fold up each side as shown.

Step 4. Use your finger to open up the fold on one side.

Step 5. Flatten and then fold as shown. Repeat for the other side.

Step 6. Fold over the top triangle of the flattened piece as shown.

Step 7. Tuck the folded triangle into the side. Do the same for the other side.

Step 8. You should have something that looks like this.

Step 9. Fold up the sides as shown.

Step 10. Apply some water along the bottom edge of the folded side.

Step 11. Join the bottom edge of one side with the bottom edge of the other side to create a cone shaped petal. Repeat for the rest of the 4"x4" squares.

Step 12. Take two cone shaped petals and dab some water along the bottom edge of one. Line up with the bottom edge of the other and join; the water will stick straight away so be sure they are lined up perfectly.

Step 13. Do the same with all five cone shaped petals. To complete, repeat to create a second flower.

Creating the Stylised Wafer Paper Rolled Rose Centres

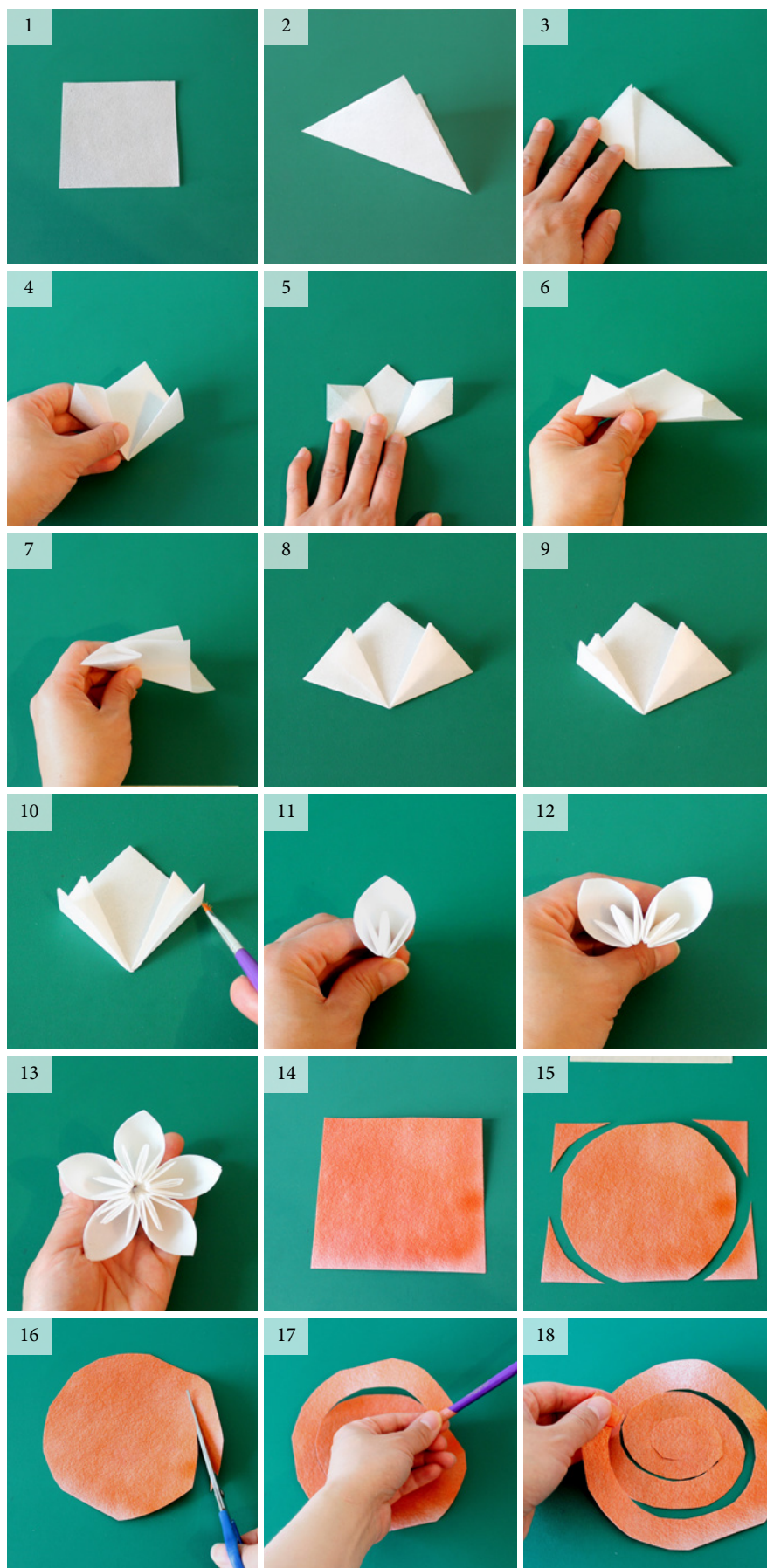
Step 14. Colour your wafer paper with the desired colour with either an edible printer, airbrush or by mixing petal dust with vegetable oil. Then cut out a 5.5"x5.5" square of the coloured wafer paper.

Step 15. Cut off the corners of the square to create a circle – you can just go by eye as the rose is meant to look organic so does not need to be perfect.

Step 16. Cut your wafer paper circle into a spiral-like strip, moving concentrically in towards the middle as shown.

Step 17. Using the tip of a brush, roll up the strip starting on the outer edge.

Step 18. Continue rolling. Every few inches, dab some water along the bottom edge of the strip to help hold the rolled shape you are forming.



Step 19. To complete, repeat to create additional rolled rose centres – you will need five more.

Creating the Stylised Wafer Paper Rolled Rose

Step 20. Using a circle craft punch and the wafer paper cut offs, punch out circles to make your outer petals. Alternatively, you can use a circle cutter as a template and use a dull tool to trace inside so you have a guide where to cut using scissors.

Step 21. Take one circle, pinch in on one end and hold for a few seconds

Step 22. Cut a small slit opposite the pinched end (approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ ").

Step 23. Dab a small amount of water on one side of the slit.

Step 24. Fold one side of the slit over the other so the bottom of the petal has a concave or cupped shape.

Step 25. You will need approximately eight petals and one rolled rose centre to create one Stylised Wafer Paper Rolled Rose.

Step 26. Dab some water at the bottom of the petal along the cupped edge.

Step 27. Attach the petal to the rolled rose centre.

Step 28. Attach your second petal, making sure to overlap half of the previous petal. Continue applying the rest of the petals, working clockwise until you have completed one full row. Use the rest to fill in where there may be gaps, using more or less petals as needed.

Step 29. To complete the Stylized Wafer Paper Rolled Rose, repeat with your remaining centres to create five more full stylised rolled roses.

Quilled Swirl Column Detailing

Step 30. Using a 50/50 mix of fondant/gumpaste, colour equal amounts of two colours of your choice (approximately 1.5lbs each or 3lbs total). Roll out the first colour using dowels as spacers to get even approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " thickness.

Step 31. Using a strip cutter or wheel cutter, cut out $\frac{1}{8}$ " wide. Repeat the previous steps for a second colour.

TIP: cut out only a few strips at a time and keep in a Ziploc bag or under cling wrap to keep from drying out.

Step 32. Dab some water on the outside edge or side of one strip. Apply to your cake in a swirly pattern as shown, sitting the strip up on its side.

Step 33. Add strips in alternating colours following the same shape as the first but leaving a slight, even gap between the strips. Continue until you've gone around the entire tier.

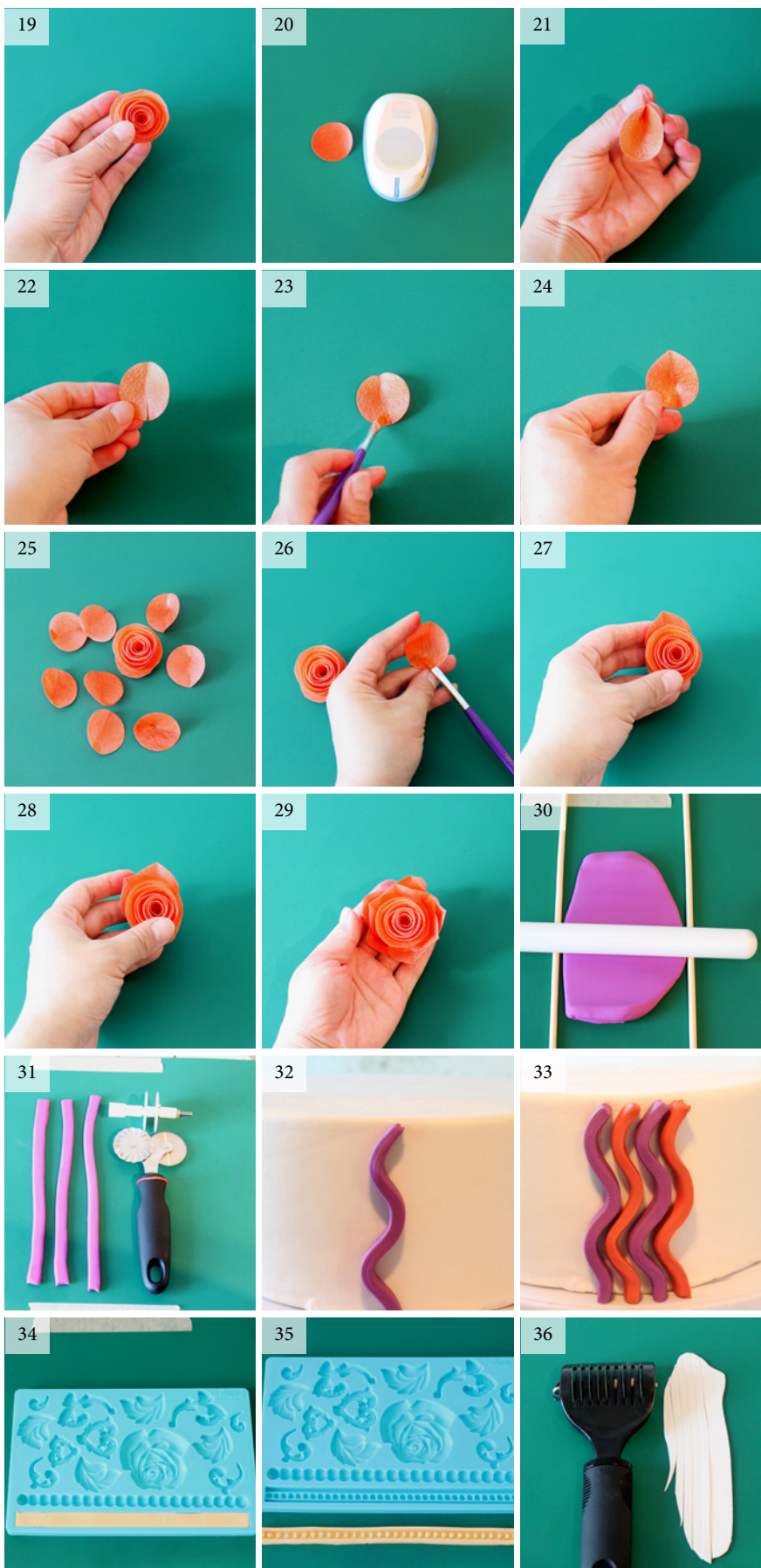
Border Trim for Plain Tiers

Step 34. Condition your 50/50 mix of fondant/gumpaste mix with some shortening. Apply shortening with a brush to the cavity of the mould being used. Press your paste mix into the cavity of the mould, remove excess and let it sit for a couple of minutes.

Step 35. Carefully unmould your border and make enough to trim the two peach coloured tiers. Attach with water and carefully paint with gold lustre dust mixed with lemon extract or clear alcohol.

Quilled Lattice Detailing

Step 36. Use 50/50 fondant/gumpaste mix and condition with shortening. Roll out to approximately $\frac{1}{16}$ " thick. Using $\frac{1}{4}$ " strip cutters, cut out a few strips at a time and keep under wraps to prevent drying.



Step 37. Using your brush, mark where you want to apply your lattice pattern with water.

Step 38. Apply water to the outside edge or side of one strip and attach as shown, sitting the strip up on its side.

TIP: you do not have to measure the exact length of strip you need as you can use a slightly longer strip and cut off the excess after you apply it, working from bottom to top.

Step 39. Apply your second strip following the shape of the first strip. Using a fine tipped brush, adjust the gap to make sure it is even between the two strips.

Step 40. Apply the rest of the lattice pattern in the order shown, remembering to adjust the gap with your brush after each section.

Creating the Filler Leaves

Step 41. Roll out 50/50 fondant/gumpaste mix that's been coloured light yellow. Roll out to approximately 1/16" thick. Using a small leaf cutter, cut out eight leaves.

Step 42. Score the bottom of the leaf with the dull end of your craft knife.

Step 43. Apply a bit of water to the scored section.

Step 44. Place a floral wire over the scored section.

Step 45. Pinch the bottom to close the gumpaste around the wire. Repeat for the rest of the cut outs and set aside to dry for at least two hours or overnight. Paint with gold lustre dust mixed with lemon extract or clear alcohol.

Creating the Filler Blossoms

Step 46. Roll out 50/50 fondant/gumpaste mix that's been coloured medium orchid. Roll out to approximately 1/16" thick. Using a small blossom cutter, cut out five or more blossoms.

Step 47. Roll out a small ball of white gumpaste just under 1/4" wide. Using needle nose wire cutters, make a small hook on one end of a 4" floral wire.

Step 48. Apply some water to the hooked end of your wire and insert into your gumpaste ball about halfway up. Close up the seam at the bottom with your fingers. Insert the bottom of the wired ball into the centre of the blossom cut out and slide it up until it touches the bottom of the gumpaste ball. Apply some water where they touch and shape the blossom into a cupped shape around the ball.

Step 49. Repeat for the rest of the blossom cut outs and leave upside down to dry for at least two hours or overnight.

Creating the Filler Berries and Assembling your Floral Spray

Step 50. Roll out six to seven small balls of white gumpaste just bigger than 1/4" wide.

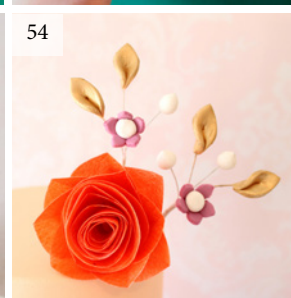
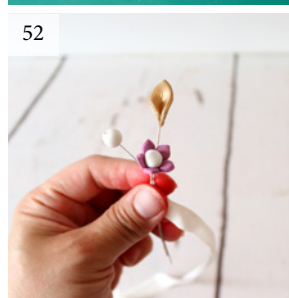
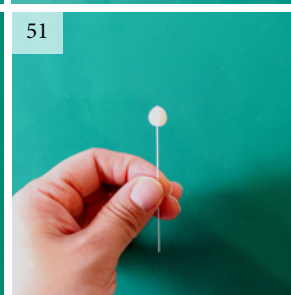
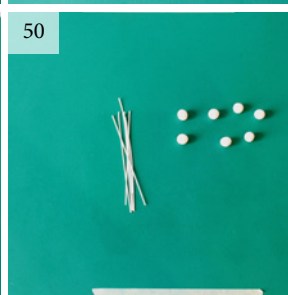
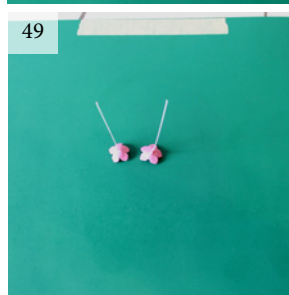
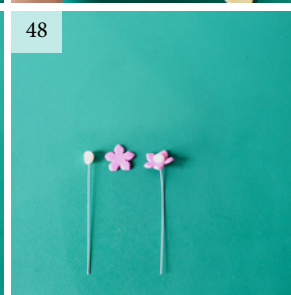
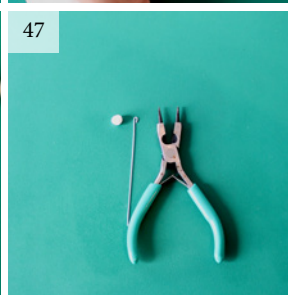
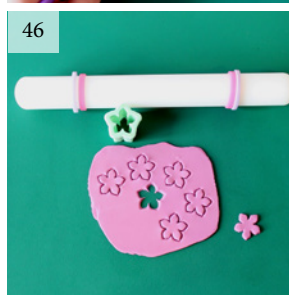
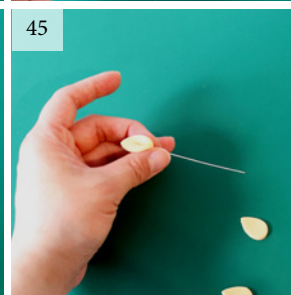
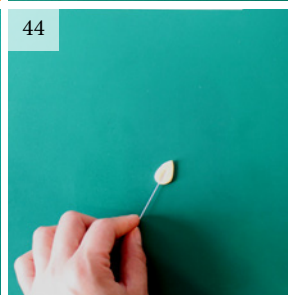
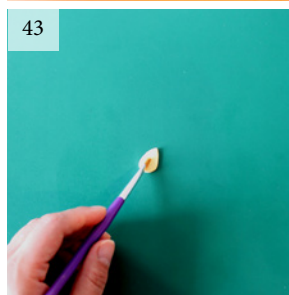
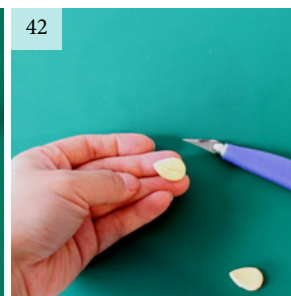
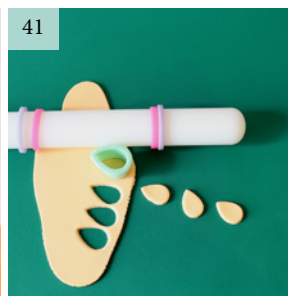
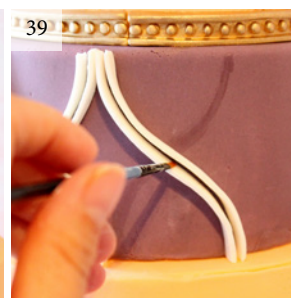
Step 51. Using a straight piece of floral wire, insert into the ball so that it just starts to poke out the other end but does not completely cut through. Repeat for the rest of the gumpaste balls.

Step 52. Gather one or two leaves and one or two berries for each blossom (it's up to you how you want to configure your floral sprays). Tape together with white floral tape starting just under the blossom. NOTE: the berries and leaves should be positioned slightly above the blossom.

Step 53. Wrap the tape down the length of the wires, taping them all together. You will need at least five bunches or sprays – two for the top tier and three for the third tier.

Final Steps

Add all your floral decorations to the cake using edible glue or water. Insert any wired flowers into your cakes using picks.



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Mastering the Art of Tall Wedding Cakes

With Ted Scutti and Adam Starkey
Sugar Sugar Cake Studio

When it comes to tall - and we mean REALLY tall cakes - do you sometimes wonder how the laws of physics allow some cakes to stand so tall? And why any cake decorator would take the stress and responsibility of such a statement piece? We speak to Ted and Adam, of Sugar Sugar Cake Studio, to get their experiences of their tall creations.

Tell us about you and your background

Ted's interest in the sugar arts began in high school when he decorated ice cream cakes part-time at Baskin-Robbins. After an extended leave from cake decorating to attend college and graduate school, and then to work 11 years in the field of consulting, Ted reignited his interest in cakes by baking a red velvet cake for a dinner party. Over the successive years, he created increasingly more elaborate cakes for friends and family and ultimately formed Sugar Sugar Cake Studio, with Adam, in 2009.

Adam always had an interest in cooking, baking and especially working with chocolate and candy. Those sweet interests continue today and Adam handles all of the sugar work for the bakery. His journey into professional sugar artistry began when he met Ted and got caught up in the whirlwind of baking that was to become Sugar Sugar Cake Studio. Adam is also responsible for engineering the structures of the most technically challenging cakes produced by this speciality bakery.

Tell us about your business

At Sugar Sugar Cake Studio, we take great pride in creating one-of-a-kind wedding and speciality cakes for the most chic and exclusive events in Arizona and beyond. Painstakingly crafting incredible works of sugar art is the signature of this renowned boutique bakery and why those in the know continually refer to Sugar Sugar Cake Studio as "the very best of the best."

We have been baking and decorating cakes for over 25 years and Sugar Sugar Cake Studio was founded in 2009. It has become

known as a world-class boutique bakery and has been featured regularly in national and international publications, as well as on TLC's "Four Weddings" television show. Ted and Adam also teach fun and informative handmade floral and sugar craft classes.

Our favourite thing about making one-of-a-kind wedding and special event cakes is watching our clients react with delight and emotion when they see one of our custom designs. Tears of joy are not an uncommon sight during our cake deliveries. When the tears of joy flow, we know we've done a good job.

Being creative allows us to help people celebrate the happiest moments of their lives. We create something for them that goes above and beyond what they ever thought a cake could be and our cakes take their events to the next level. That is the aspect of this business that makes designing and handcrafting custom cakes so rewarding. The accolades and thank you notes that we receive from our clients (as well as their referrals to other clients and their own repeat business) make it all worth it.

Tell us why brides go for really tall towering cakes

A towering cake makes a grand statement at a wedding reception. We work almost exclusively on high-end weddings; the wedding planners and couples who call upon us do so because we are known for creating dramatically tall wedding cakes that steal the show. One of the venues we work in has gorgeous stone walls that are 30' tall. A wedding cake has to have major height in order to command attention in such a large space. There is nothing shy or demure about a Sugar Sugar Cake Studio wedding cake. Our towering cakes are always in both figurative and literal good taste, but we definitely specialise in show-stopper wedding cakes. Clients who collaborate with us do so because they want a wedding cake with a real "wow"



Robert Garcia of Robert G. Photography

factor. We hear from couples, years after their weddings, that people are still talking about the wedding cakes we designed for them.

What do you love about this style of cake?

Towering cakes truly embody the Sugar Sugar Cake Studio aesthetic. Towering cakes have huge impact and the “wow” factor that takes a wedding reception to the next level. We strive to make all of our cakes sophisticated, luxurious and elegant. Our signature style includes skyscraper height, lush handmade florals, exuberant use of colour, layers of texture, contrasting levels of sheen, fine details, luxury ingredients and world-class materials. When designed correctly, towering cakes have elegant and sophisticated silhouettes.

Due to their size, towering cakes create more opportunities to show off interesting techniques and to use luxe materials. The metallic accents on our Peacock cake are authentic Florentine gold leaf. The gold leaf plaques were built on gumpaste bases. The flowers and decorations that we made in advance for this cake took approximately five months of work to complete. However, we also like to include a bit of whimsy in our designs: for example, the “grass” on the cake board was made of different shades of green sprinkles.

What needs to be considered when developing a design for really tall cakes?

The design considerations for a towering cake are the same as for a standard wedding cake, but on a much grander scale. Each element must be considered very carefully as part of the overall design. The design must be balanced and interesting enough from a distance to draw guests in to appreciate all of the fine details.

Structure and support

The most fundamental consideration for the design of a towering cake is structure and support. Nothing is worse than a 5' tall cake that starts to lilt to one side like the Tower of Pisa. A baker who specialises in towering cakes knows how to avoid that disaster: it comes down to structure and support. Towering cakes need to be designed, from the beginning, with stability in mind. One of the best ways to do this is to place as much of the real cake toward the base as possible. That lowers the centre of gravity for the tower and makes it more stable. We use faux tiers for the highest tiers on our cakes because they require the tower to support less weight toward the top of the design. In addition to making the cake more stable, smaller faux tiers are easier for a venue to disassemble and serve to the guests.

Scale and Proportion

Scale and proportion are critical elements of designer wedding cakes. The silhouette of a cake can make or break an elegant design. At Sugar Sugar Cake Studio, we collaborate with speciality vendors, like Dallas Foam, to create a custom Styrofoam mock-ups of every wedding cake that we create during

the planning stages. This allows us to see the silhouette in 3D and to make any adjustments before we work with the real cake. Special thanks go to Kerry Vincent because she suggested stacking faux tiers to see what a cake will look like on “Food Network Challenge” – it inspired us to create our silhouette mock ups.

Tell us the different methods you use to stack cakes

All of our cakes are baked entirely from scratch using proprietary recipes that have been carefully tested to ensure that they are delicious and moist, but sturdy enough to stand up to our designs and work in the environment of Phoenix, Arizona. We make our buttercream fillings from scratch using only real butter and our recipe is meringue-based. Our clients rave about its delicious taste – yet it is strong enough to execute our designs. We finish our cakes in ganache. As a result, our cakes do not sag or shift. This is due to the amount of structure we place inside our cakes, and because we control the temperature of our cakes to ensure they will be cold enough to remain stable throughout the journey to the venue and until they will be served.

A weighted pin makes rolling out large quantities of fondant a much easier task. We enjoy the quality of our Caketrick Original Fondant Roller. This rolling pin is HEAVY and it makes quick work of rolling out big pieces of fondant for grand wedding and special occasion cakes. A tool like this is an investment, but we use this rolling pin on every one of our cakes. We do not own a sheeter so our weighted rolling pin is an essential tool.

We use a level throughout the process of creating a towering cake. We use this tool to confirm that our tiers are level as we fill each layer of cake and that our ganache is level on the top of each tier. As we pre-assemble sections of our cakes, we use this tool at each step to make sure that everything remains level. When we arrive at the venue, the first thing we do is check the cake table to confirm that it is also level. It is surprising how often the cake table is not level. For a towering cake, even if the cake table is only a slight bit off level, the cake can look really crooked when it stands five or six feet tall above the tabletop. We bring wood shims with us in case we need to elevate some of the table legs to make it level. Once we confirm that the table is level in all directions, we then assemble the sections of our cake. We use the level as we add each section to make sure that everything remains perfectly level in all directions. If something is out of alignment, we use popsicle sticks as shims to make corrections on the fly. We also check the level in multiple directions because the cake must be straight and true when viewed from any angle at the reception. A towering cake will be in almost every picture of the reception and it must be straight and true no matter what side of the cake is showing.



Towering cakes are extremely heavy. The bottom tier of a 6' cake will have to support 250lbs or more above it. A stable design calls for reliable supports. We use food safe (NSF) drinking water pipe that is 1" in diameter with 1/8" thick walls for our supports. Once we measure the height of the supports that we need for a tier, we cut the drinking water pipe to size with a chop saw and sanitise and dry the cut pipe before inserting it into our cake. To help get the drinking water pipe flush with the fondant surface on the cake, we pound it into place gently with a rubber mallet. After the event is over, we instruct the staff to dispose of the drinking water pipe supports because we do not reuse them.

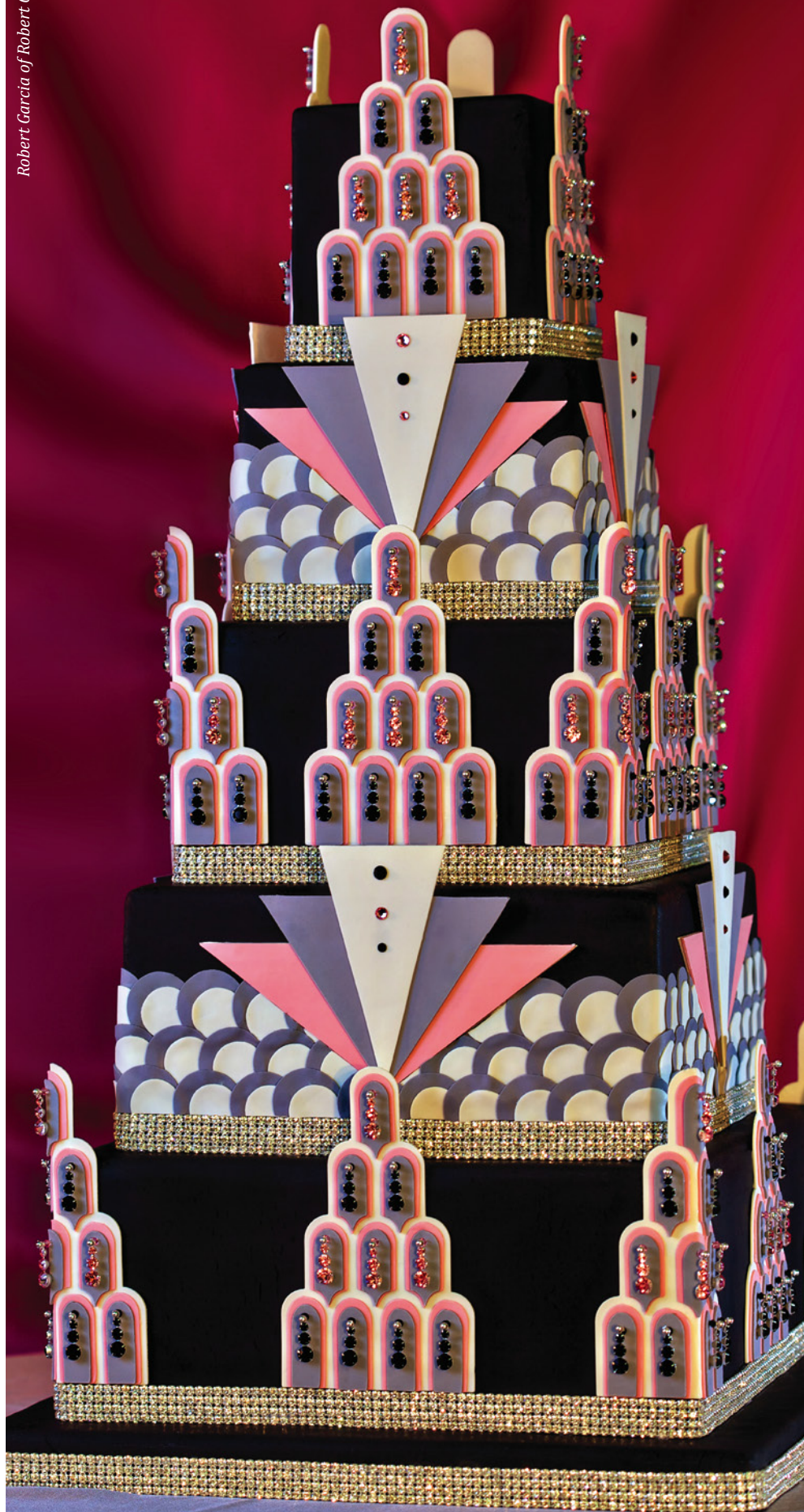
We use 1/2" thick cake boards to support every tier in one of our towering cakes. We collaborate with our vendor, Dallas Foam, to create the cake boards for all of our custom cakes. Dallas Foam drills a 1 1/4" hole in the middle of all of our cake boards that we use to align our towering cakes during assembly at the venue. They also drill a 1 1/4" hole through the centre of any cake dummies for a wedding cake and we core our real cakes to the same specifications to allow for easy alignment.

Needle nose pliers are an essential tool for arranging handmade flowers for both floral spheres and tier separators. Needle nose pliers are also very handy if a cake needs to be shimmed with popsicle sticks during final assembly.

Ganache is a delicious frosting because it is made from milk or white chocolate. Ganache also allows for incredibly smooth cake surfaces and sharp edges. A critical tool to accomplish those smooth surfaces and sharp edges is a bench scraper. Our cakes stand 6 1/2" tall (per tier) so we needed oversized scrapers. Eventually, we found 10" bench scrapers that were large enough to frost our cakes with ganache. This is an extremely handy tool that we use on every cake we make. We are very pleased with the bench scrapers from Fat Girl Cakes. Beyond the unique 8", 10" and 12" sizes they offer, their bench scrapers are made with excellent quality. The blades are thick and sturdy so they do not bend as you apply ganache to the sides of a cake. The handles are also comfortable to hold.

A rubber mallet is critical to pound our pipe supports into our tiers. We also use a rubber mallet to drive wooden dowels through stacked tiers when we need to make certain that we have structural integrity before moving a section.

Silicone moulds create beautiful and precise cake decorations for our wedding cake production. We are especially fond of the gorgeous and versatile Enhanced Lace Molds that Earlene Moore designed for Marvelous Molds. We often need many impressions from the same mould to complete a luxury wedding cake design. To speed the process, we use at least two of each mould design, which cuts our production time in half. For cakes with



many repeats of the same design, we acquire multiple moulds to further speed the process. A heavy-duty rotating cake stand is an essential tool for producing elaborate cakes. One Fat Daddio's turntable did a great job rotating our cakes, but we had to hunch over for hours to apply detailed decorations. Eventually, we stacked one turntable on top of another to bring the cakes up higher for detail work. This trick allows you to elevate cakes as needed during the decorating process and reduce back strain. It is best if the turntables are exactly alike; centre the second turntable over the first to keep everything stable. The Agbay Cake Leveler is an indispensable tool for professionally torting a cake. We struggled to attain perfect cake layers until we invested in ours. We experienced some difficulty using the tool at first because our cakes are made from scratch with European butter and we were chilling them before splitting them into layers. Upon speaking with Maureen Agbay, the very helpful company owner, she recommended that we split our cakes once they cool to room temperature, but before we chill them. We have been on the level with Agbay ever since.

The challenge with tinting fondant for a large cake is making sure there is enough to cover the entire cake without a huge amount of custom-coloured fondant left over. We tint a small amount of fondant in a very deep shade of the desired final colour, then weigh amounts of the deeply tinted and white fondant and knead them together until we achieve the desired shade. We document the proportion. In the case of our Love Blooms in a Royal Garden Peacock Cake, we mixed 1oz of deep green with 16oz of white. This approach allows us to knead small batches as we need them and achieve consistent colour. As other professionals know, it can be very difficult to knead 25lbs of fondant at once for a project; this method allows smaller, more manageable batches to be created during the decorating process.

A significant challenge with towering cakes, like our Elegant Ivory Lace Cake, was the delicate silhouette. We needed to provide 250 servings of cake but we did not want the cake to appear bulky or squatty. We used styrofoam dummies to mock-up the silhouette before we finalised the cake design. During the design process, we created five different sketches before the clients made their final selection. The final cake stood over 5' tall from the cake board up. This cake took a tremendous amount of time to complete as it had hundreds of handmade flowers in addition to the significant baking required to serve 250 guests. The final approval of the design for this cake occurred only two weeks prior to the event and we worked nearly non-stop from that point until the day of the wedding. The final push included three consecutive all-nighters (a tie for our record). We were delighted when the wedding planner told us this was the most beautiful wedding cake that she had ever seen. The mother of the bride

Robert Garcia of Robert G. Photography
Elegant Ivory Lace Cake



stopped by as we were completing the four-hour setup to tell us that the cake far exceeded her expectations.

The focus of this cake was the lace. The bride had a couture gown that featured intricate lace and Adam and I decided to use that as a design inspiration for the wedding cake. Several of Earlene's Enhanced Lace Molds were similar to the bridal gown lace, so we used them throughout the design. Each tier featured a different lace design and the colours of the cake and handmade flowers were based on the white and ivory scheme for the wedding. Due to the amount of moulded lace on the cake, it took almost an entire day just to form all the pieces. We learned to make at least one extra piece of each lace design after calculating how many are needed for each tier; variation in the size of each tier after ganache and rolled fondant are added impact the final circumference of the tiers, and the extra piece may be required at the last minute to complete the design. In order to make the day of final assembly much less stressful, Adam formed all of the moulded pieces ahead of time and stored them between pieces of wax paper in airtight containers in the freezer until they were needed. This allowed us to have the pieces pre-moulded and all we had to do was remove them from the freezer a few minutes before we needed them so that they would become flexible again. As an added bonus, the slight bit of moisture that freezing added to the gumpaste helped the moulded lace pieces to adhere to the rolled fondant on the cake.

Give us an idea of how much ingredients you used for this cake

People are often surprised by the sheer amount of ingredients and supplies that go into a towering cake. Our Elegant Ivory Lace cake served 250 guests at a "platinum" wedding. Here is the list of everything that went into the cake:

- 358 eggs
- 47lbs butter
- 58lbs of sugar
- 29lbs of flour
- 1 quart Madagascar Vanilla Extract
- 1½ gallons of whole milk
- 1 gallon of buttermilk
- 1 pint of red food colouring
- 12lbs of raspberries
- 1 case of oranges (approx. 10lbs)
- 15lbs of rolled fondant
- 20lbs gumpaste
- 1,800 crystals
- 500 pearls
- 10 yards of ribbon
- 5 rolls florists tape
- 2 yards dupioni silk
- 18 cake boards
- 21 linear feet of PVC pipe

No matter how beautiful a cake is, it **MUST** be delicious. We work extremely hard to ensure that our cakes are as fresh and wholesome as possible. We also use world-class ingredients (e.g. French Valrhona chocolate, Swiss fondant, organic butter from Point Reyes, California, etc.) to ensure that our cakes are

the best our clients and their guests have ever tasted. We sometimes find that we have to prove this during our tastings: some people believe it's not possible to have a great tasting and beautiful cake.

What should couples consider when choosing the design of their cakes?

First and foremost, hire the right baker for the cake that you want. If your dream is a towering wedding cake, pick a baker with a portfolio that is full of beautiful, towering wedding cakes. If the baker works in a wide range of styles like we do, you may not like the aesthetic of every cake in their portfolio. But you should be consistently impressed by the quality and neatness of their work. Make sure that you "click" with the baker who will make your wedding cake. If you do not seem able to communicate with one another, or if the baker is not "getting" your vision for your wedding cake, move on.

We are blessed with clients who are genuinely delightful to work with and that makes our job a joy. We are picky ourselves so we know what our clients expect, we anticipate their needs and we deliver in a professional manner. Over time, we have also learned to judge if a couple will be a good fit for us to work with; we will refer couples to other bakers who are not open to having fun and enjoying a collaborative cake design process that is required for a one-of-a-kind wedding cake.

The focus of our business is bespoke wedding and celebration cakes. The best advice we can give a couple before meeting with us is not to spend hours online or on Pinterest pouring over endless photos of wedding cakes. Every cake we make is an original design that is specific to the couple getting married. If a couple comes to us deadset on a design, we will use it as inspiration for a custom cake, but this often limits our creativity and the impact of the final product.

We don't approach cake design by dragging out a dogeared portfolio of easily replicated designs for a couple to select from. We start by asking the couple a series of questions and listening carefully to their answers. We want to get to know the personality of the couple so that we can make their cake truly personal and unique. We want to hear things like how they met, how the proposal occurred, and anything else that informs us about their likes and dislikes. Of course, we need to understand the aesthetic and mood of the event so that the cake we design will fit within the context of a beautiful day for the happy couple.

How do you transport cakes, what are your top tips?

A cold cake is a stable cake. We make sure our cakes are as cold as possible before we transport them. Our cakes are usually on display at least five hours at the reception before they are served, so there is plenty of time for them to warm up once they are safely in place at the venue.

We design our cakes in sections for ease

of transport. Our towering cakes usually comprise at least three separate sections. Our cakes travel on non-slip shelf liner in our delivery vehicle. The weight of the cakes, in combination with the non-slip shelf liner, guarantees that our cakes will not slide around in the vehicle as we drive to the venue. Even so, we drive very carefully and try to take turns as gently as possible.

We own a delivery cart with wheels that fold up. The entire cart folds up to about 3" thick, which makes it simple to transport. The cart can also carry a few hundred pounds. It has allowed us to deliver cakes to very challenging venues with ease. Towering cakes can be very heavy and it is difficult to carry 200lbs of cake for a long distance, even with two people carrying the cake.

Do you agree with "fake" cake tiers?

Absolutely! We use faux cake tiers in every towering cake we design. Smaller diameter cake tiers warm up too fast and become unstable. We try not to have any real cakes smaller than 10" in diameter on our wedding cakes. 10" diameter cakes and larger have enough mass to stay cold throughout the delivery and setup process. Smaller diameter tiers in Styrofoam can be decorated in advance and weigh less, so the higher cake sections are easier for the venue staff to remove. Just by looking at our cakes, no one can tell which tiers are faux and which are real cake because we decorate them exactly the same.

One of the most important things to consider when creating a design with faux tiers is to make sure that you will have plenty of real cake for all of the guests at the reception. It is a piece of cake to determine how many servings a tier will yield with Earlene Moore's Cake Serving Chart. We constantly refer to this chart and we find it to be very accurate. We always plan for extra servings in our towering cakes because we can think of nothing worse than running out of delicious and decadent wedding cake!

Tell us about dividers used between tiers, are these a good idea?

We love the use of tier dividers/separators; they elongate silhouettes and lighten designs. We often fill tier separators with handmade flowers because it provides an opportunity to showcase the floral work without impacting the cake servings. We also favour tier dividers because we use them to break up our towering cakes into sections for transport and assembly.

Tier dividers can also be prepared well in advance of completing the wedding cake. Handmade flowers add incredible detail and elegance to grand cakes. Arranging flowers for cakes is a time-consuming process that can be especially stressful during the final push to complete a cake. Arranging your flowers ahead of time allows you to focus on completing your beautiful cake prior to delivery and setup. An added benefit is that these floral arrangements can become keepsakes.

Nothing finishes off a towering wedding cake better than a sphere of handmade flowers. Arranging handmade flowers into a sphere makes a grand cake topper. After the event, the floral sphere can be displayed in a vase and enjoyed by the client as a keepsake. We build our signature arrangements on 6" diameter spheres for a sense of luxury. Placing the spheres on sharpened dowels prior to adding the flowers allows for easier handling, transport and display.

How do you de-construct the cake?

We design our cakes so that the staff at the venue can de-construct them easily. We build our cakes in sections that the venue staff can remove prior to cutting and serving the cake tiers. More often than not, the top section of our wedding cakes are faux, which makes them easier for the venue to remove because Styrofoam tiers weight much less than cake tiers. When we deliver and set up a wedding cake, we ask to speak to the person from the venue who will be responsible for serving the cake and walk them through the process of how to take the cake apart. We find that many venue staff are intimidated at the thought of dismantling a 5' or 6' tall wedding cake, so we will repeat the instructions and answer questions until the venue staff are comfortable with the process. For our most complex and heavy designs, we create a diagram for how to take apart the cake that we leave with the venue staff.

How do you cope with wedding cake on a hot summer's day?

The summer weather in Phoenix is so extreme that most weddings are indoors and clients focused on custom wedding events often opt to schedule when the weather is more pleasant. When we do make a cake in the summer, we make sure to chill it as cold as we can before transport.

During the heat of the summer, it can be a real challenge to cover cakes in rolled fondant. As temperatures rise, fondant becomes too soft. We use fondant that is designed for warm climates, Carma Massa Ticino Tropic Fondant, but high heat is still an issue for us. During a particularly challenging day, when the air conditioning was on the fritz and we were covering cakes in 95 degree temperatures, we discovered a technique to beat the heat. Rolling enough fondant to cover the cake and wrapping it in clear wrap before placing it in the freezer long enough to chill it, but not long enough to freeze it, made the fondant workable again.

For more information, visit:

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Owl Wedding Cake Tutorial

by Erin Schwartz, Stacked



When Erin Schwartz decorated her first cake for a friend's birthday, she instantly fell in love. Upon graduating high school, Erin knew she wanted to get a degree in Baking and Pastry Arts. Not only did Erin accomplish this at the Culinary Institute of America in New York, but she was also first in her class! Now owning her own company, Stacked in Virginia, USA, Erin loves to push herself to create unique sculpted cakes and has been recently experimenting with different special effects such as lights and fire!

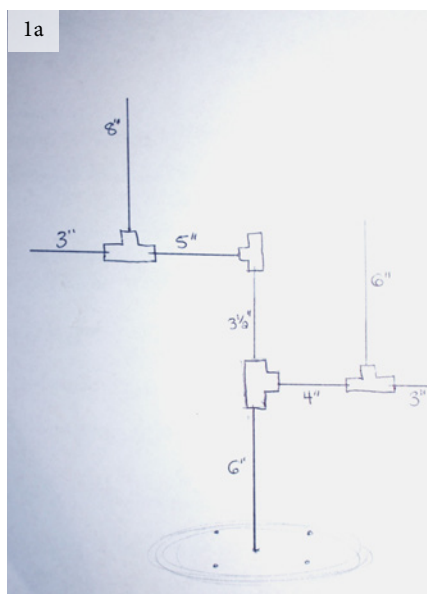
Equipment Required

- 1/2" black pipe (2x 3", 3.5", 4", 5", 2x 6" and 8")
- 1/2" floor flange
- 4 #10 screws
- Screw driver
- 4x 1/2" T connectors
- Wooden board
- 1/2" foam core board
- X-acto knife
- Hot glue gun/glue
- Chocolate
- Dowels
- Cakes, 2" high rounds (2x 5", 3x 6", 2x 7")
- Ganache
- Rice Krispies Treats
- Modelling chocolate
- Rolling pin
- Fondant
- Dresden/etching tools
- Piping gel
- Paint brush
- Bark texture mat
- Airbrush/airbrush colours (brown and black)
- Rose petal cutters
- Rose leaf veiner
- Chocolate cookies
- Shredded coconut
- Gel colours (desired colours for owls, green and yellow for grass)



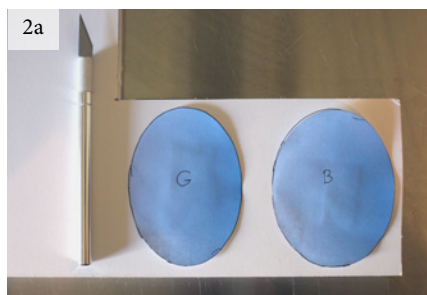
Steps 1a & 1b.

To start, you need to create a support frame. There are kits like CakeFrame or you can build your own with piping or wood. Once you have created the structure, screw this into your cake board securely.

**Steps 2a & 2b.**

Next, you need to cut out your cake boards. This will greatly depend on the size and shape owl you wish to create. In this situation, I had a 3.5"x2.5" circle and a 3.5"x2.75" oval. Trace these shapes onto 1/2" foam core and cut out using an X-acto knife.

NOTE: Be sure to label your templates and boards as you work if you have two different sizes; I used "G" and "B" for the girl and boy boards. The boy board was slightly larger. Angle one side of your board inwards to slope the boards.

**Step 3.**

Cut a circle out of the centre of each board large enough to snugly fit it over your "T" fitting.

**Step 4.**

Hot glue each board in place and coat your structure with melted chocolate or fondant to ensure all the structure is food safe.

**Steps 5a & 5b.**

Stack your cake layers from smallest to largest and trim as you work, a little at a time, until you achieve your desired body shape. The important part is to keep the base as the smallest point and to cut the bottom tier so that it continues that slant of your board (going upward and outward). Place ganache in between each cake layer to secure and don't forget to dowel your cakes after it is around 4"-5" high! Coat the entire cake with ganache as you finish.

Step 6.

Using whatever medium you like, here I used Rice Krispies Treats, build up the "tree" to the desired thickness; mine is around 4". This is also the perfect time to add some bulk to the branches if you wish.

Step 7.

For additional security and smoothness, I added a thin layer of modelling chocolate around my Rice Krispies Treats. Since the bark is going over this, it is not crucial to be perfectly smooth!

**Step 8.**

Using an etching tool of sorts, scratch "Mr & Mrs" into a heart shaped piece of fondant. Attach using piping gel to the front of your tree.

**Steps 9a-c.**

Start applying your bark in sections by marbling a few different colours together and pressing pieces onto a bark texture mat. Simply attach these using piping gel.

**Step 10.**

At this point, airbrush your bark. This way, you don't have to worry about getting dark airbrush on your light coloured owls later on.

Steps 11a & 11b.

Look at your owls and their body shapes and think about what your best/cleanest method would be to cover it. For example, with my male owl, I covered the body and head sections separately and textured as desired (using a dresden tool, my personal favourite).

NOTE: Keep in mind you want any seams to be easily hidden; put seams either in the back or on the side where your wings can cover them!



Step 12.

For the wings, I simply use petal shaped cutters and a rose leaf veiner for a quick and easy texture! Use water to attach and shingle your "feathers" from bottom to top!

11b



12

**Step 13.**

To create the eyes, first hand model equally sized/shaped pieces in white and attach. Next, attach a black pupil and then a small white reflection dot. If you want to make your owls a bit more animated, like mine are here, roll out thin snakes of black. Using water, attach around the outer portions.

Step 14.

For the beaks, roll a small cone of fondant in your hand. Using your X-acto, cut through the centre of this cone about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through. Separate these sections and fine-tune them into the precise shape desired. Simply attach this piece with water.

NOTE: For added security, feel free to also use a toothpick or small wire to fasten the beak.

Steps 15a & 15b.

Accessorize! Have fun and be creative! Here, I simply made a black fondant bow and top hat for the groom and used some sugar lace for a little bridal veil.

13



14



15a



15b

**Step 16.**

If you want to make your etched writing in the tree POP, simply brush over your writing with brown airbrush colour or brown petal dust using a small paintbrush.

Step 17.

To decorate the board, I first crushed chocolate cookies and spread them directly around the base of the tree. Next, I coloured coconut using green and yellow gel colour and spread this "grass" on the remainder of the board

Finally.

Glue a ribbon around the perimeter of your board. Use a ribbon a bit thicker than your board so there is a rim above the board itself to keep in your "grass".

16



17



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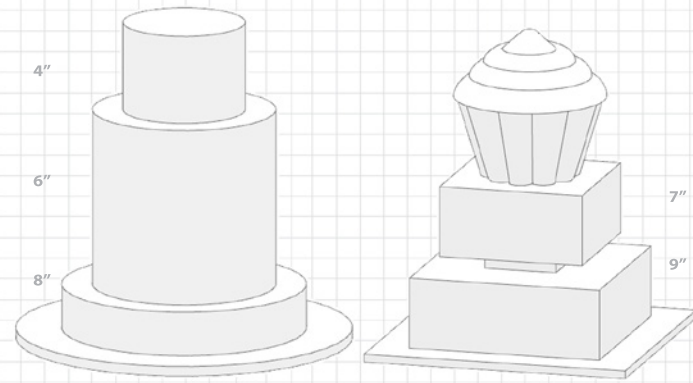
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